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THE HIDDEN HAND

— BY —
MRS. SOUTHWORTH,

— AUTHOR OF —
"THE CURSE OF CLIFTON," "THE CHANGED BRIDES," ETC.

THE TORONTO NEWS COMPANY, PUBLISHERS,
TORONTO AND NIAGARA FALLS, ONT.

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CHAPTER I.

THE NOCTURNAL VISIT.

... Whence is that knocking?
How is't with me when every sound appears to me?
... I hear a knocking
In the south entry! Hark!—more knocking!

SHAKESPEARE.

Hurricane Hall is a large old family mansion, built of dark, red sandstone, in one of the loneliest and wildest of the mountain regions of Virginia.

The estate is surrounded on three sides by a range of steep, gray rocks, spiked with clumps of dark evergreens, and called, from its horse-shoe form, the Devil's Hoof.

On the fourth side the ground gradually descends in broken rock and barren soil to the edge of the wild mountain stream known as the Devil's Run.

When storms and floods were high, the loud roaring of the wind through the wild mountain gorges, and the terrific raging of the torrent over its rocky course, gave to this savage locality its ill-omened names of Devil's Hoof, Devil's Run, and Hurricane Hall.

Major Ira Warfield, the lonely proprietor of the Hall, was a veteran officer, who, in disgust at what he supposed to be ill-required services, had retired from public life to spend the evening of his vigorous age on this his patrimonial estate. Here he lived in seclusion, with his old-fashioned house-keeper, Mrs. Condiment, and his old family servants and his favorite dogs and horses. Here his mornings were usually spent in the chase, in which he excelled, and his afternoon and evenings were occupied in small convivial suppers among his few chosen companions of the chase or the bottle.

In person Major Warfield was tall and strongly built, reminding one of some old iron-limbed Douglas of the olden time. His features were large and harsh; his complexion dark red, as that of one bronzed by long exposure and flushed with strong drink. His fierce, dark gray eyes were surmounted by thick, heavy black brows, that, when gathered into a frown, reminded one of a thunder cloud, as the flashing orbs beneath them did of lightning. His hard, harsh face was surrounded by a thick growth of iron-gray hair and beard that met beneath his chin. His usual habit was a black cloth coat, crimson vest, black leather breeches, long, black yarn stockings, fastened at the knees, and morocco slippers with silver buttons.

In character Major Warfield was arrogant,

domineering, and violent—equally loved and feared by his faithful old family servants at home—disliked and dreaded by his neighbors and acquaintances abroad, who, partly from his house and partly from his character, fixed upon him the appropriate nickname of Old Hurricane.

There was, however, other ground of dislike besides that of his arrogant mind, violent temper and domineering habits. Old Hurricane was said to be an old bachelor, yet rumor whispered that there was in some obscure part of the world, hidden away from human sight, a deserted wife and child, poor, feeble, and heart-broken. It was Warfield had mysteriously disappeared, and not without some suspicion of foul play on the part of the only person in the world who had a strong interest in his "taking off." However these things might be, it was known for a certainty that Old Hurricane had an only sister, widowed, sick and poor, who with her son dwelt on a wretched life of ill-requited toil, severe privation, and painful infirmity, in a distant city, unaided, unsought and uncared for by her cruel brother.

It was the night of the last day of October; eighteen hundred and forty-five. The evening had closed in dark and gloomy. About dusk the wind arose in the northwest, driving up masses of leaden-hued clouds, and in a few minutes the ground was covered deep with snow, and the air was filled with driving sleet.

As this was All Hallow Eve, the dreadful inclemency of the weather did not prevent the negroes of Hurricane Hall from availing themselves of their capricious old master's permission, and going off in a body to a banjo break-down held in the negro quarters of their next neighbor.

Upon this evening, then, there was left at Hurricane Hall only Major Warfield, Mrs. Condiment and his little old house-keeper, and Wool his body-servant.

Early in the evening the old hall was shut up closely to keep out as much as possible the sound of the storm that roared through the mountain chasms, and cannonaded the walls of the house as if determined to force an entrance. As soon as she had seen that all was safe, Mrs. Condiment went to bed and went to sleep.

It was about ten o'clock that night, that Old Hurricane, well wrapped up in his quilted flannel dressing-gown, sat in his well-padded easy chair before a warm and bright fire, taking his comfort in his own most comfortable bedroom. This was the hour of the coziest enjoyment to the self-indulgent old Sybarite, who dearly loved his own

ease. And indeed every means and appliance of bodily comfort was at hand. Strong oaken shutters and thick heavy curtains at the windows kept out every draft of air, and so deadened the sound of the wind that its subdued meaning was just sufficient to remind one of the stormy weather without in contrast to the bright warmth within. Old Hurricane, as I said, sat well wrapped up in his padded dressing-gown, and reclining in his padded easy chair, with his head thrown back and his feet upon the fire iron, toasting his shins and sipping his punch. On his right hand stood a little table with a lighted candle, a stack of clay pipes, a jug of punch, lemons, sugar, Holland gin, etc., while on the hearth sat a kettle of boiling water to help to replenish the jug if needful.

On his left hand stood his cozy bedstead with its warm crimson curtains festooned back, revealing the luxurious swell of the full feather bed, and pillows with their snow white linen and lamb-wool blankets inviting repose. Between this bedstead and the corner of the fire-place stood Old Hurricane's ancient body-servant Wool, engaged in warming a crimson cloth night cap.

"Fools!" muttered Old Hurricane over his punch—"jacks! they'll all get the pleurisy except those that get drunk! Did they all go, Wool?"

"Every man, 'oman and child, sir!—cept 'is me and conchman, sar."

"More fools they! And I shouldn't wonder if you, you old scarecrow, didn't want to go too!"

"No, Marse—"

"I know better, sir! don't contradict me! Well, as soon as I'm in bed, and that won't be long now, you may go!—so that you get back in time to wait on me to-morrow morning!"

"Thanky, Marse."

"Hold your tongue! You are as big a fool as the rest."

"I take this," said Old Hurricane, as he sipped his punch and smacked his lips—"I take this to be the very quintessence of human enjoyment—sitting here in my soft, warm chair before the fire, toasting my legs, warming my punch, listening on the one hand to the storm without, and glancing on the other hand at my comfortable bed waiting there to receive my sleepy head. If there is anything better than this in this world, I wish somebody would let me know it."

"It's all werry comfortable indeed, Marse," said the obsequious Wool.

"I wonder now if there is anything on the face of the earth that would tempt me to leave my cozy fireside and go abroad to night? I wonder

how large a promise of pleasure or profit or glory it would take now?"

"Much as ebbin Congress its'ef could give it if give you a pittance for all your services," suggested Wool.

"Yes, and more! for I wouldn't leave my home comforts to-night to ensure not only the pension but the thanks of Congress!" said the old man, replenishing his glass with steaming punch, and drinking it off leisurely.

The clock struck eleven. The old man replenished his glass, and while tipping its contents said: "You may all the warming-pan and warm my bed, Wool. The fumes of this fragrant punch are beginning to rise to my head and make me sleepy."

The servant filled the warming-pan with glowing embers, shut down the lid, and thrust it between the sheets, to warm the couch of the luxurious Old Hurricane. The old man continued to toast his feet, sip his punch, and smack his lips. He finished his glass, set it down, and was just in the act of drawing on his woollen night cap preparatory to stepping into his well-warmed bed, when he was suddenly startled by a loud ringing of the hall door-bell.

"What the foul fiend can that mean at this time of night!" exclaimed Old Hurricane, dropping his night-cap, and turning sharply around towards Wool, who, warming-pan in hand, stood staring with astonishment. "What does that mean, I ask you?"

"Deed, I dunno, sar, less it's some benighted traveller in search of shelter out'n de storm."

"Humph! and in search of supper, too, of course, and every one gone away or gone to bed but you and me!"

At this moment the ringing was followed by a loud knocking.

"Marse, don't less you and me listen to it, and then we ain't 'bliged to sturb ourselves wid answering it," suggested Wool.

"Seath, sir! do you think that I am going to turn a deaf ear to a stranger that comes to my house for shelter on such a night as this? Go and answer the bell directly."

"Yes, sar."

"But stop—look here, sirrah—mind I am not to be disturbed. If it is a traveller, ask him in, set refreshments before him, and show him to bed. I'm not going to leave my warm room to welcome anybody to-night, please the Lord. Do you hear?"

"Yes, sar," said the clerk, retreating.

As Wool took a shaded taper and opened the door leading from his master's chamber, the wind was heard howling through the long passages ready to burst into the cozy bedroom.

"Shut the door, you scoundrel!" roared the old man, folding the skirt of his warm dressing-gown across his knees, and hovering closer to the fire.

Wool quickly obeyed, and was heard retreating down the steps.

"Whew!" said the old man, spreading his hands over the blaze with a look of comfortable appreciation. "What would induce me to go abroad on such a night as this? Wind blowing great guns from the north-west—snow falling fast from the heavens, and rising just as before the wind from the ground—cold as Lapland, dark as Erebus! No telling the earth from the sky. Whew! and to comfort the cold thought, Old Hurricane poured out another glass of smoking punch, and began to sip it.

"How I thank the Lord that I am not a doctor! If I were a doctor now, the sound of that bell at this hour of night would frighten me. I should think some old woman had been taken with the palsy, and wanted me to get up and go out into the storm, to turn out of my warm bed to ride ten miles through the snow to prescribe for her. A doctor never can feel sure, even in the worst of weather, of a good night's rest. But, thank heaven, I am free from all such annoyances, and if I am sure of anything in this world it is of my comfortable night's sleep." said Old Hurricane, as he sipped his punch, smacked his lips and toasted his feet.

At this moment Wool re-appeared.

"Shut zis room, you villain! Do you intend to stand there holding it open on me all night?" vociferated the old man.

Wool hastily closed the offending portals, and hurried to his master's side.

"Well, sir, who was it rung the bell?"

"Please, Marster, sir, it war de Reverend Mr. Parson Goodwin."

"Goodwin! Been to make a sick call, I suppose, and got caught in the snow-storm. I declare it is as bad to be a parson as it is to be a doctor. Thank the Lord, I am not a parson either; if I were now, I might be called away from my cosy arm-chair and fire-side to ride twelve miles to comfort some old man dying of quinsy. Wool, help me into bed, pile on more comforters, tuck me up warm, put a bottle of hot water to my feet, and then go and attend to the parson," said the old man, getting up and moving toward his inviting couch.

"Sar! sar! stop sar, if you please!" cried Wool, going after him.

"Why, what does the old fool mean," exclaimed Old Hurricane angrily.

"Sar, de Reverend Mr. Parson Goodwin say how he must see you yourse'f, personable, alone!"

"See me, you villain! Didn't you tell him that I had retired?"

"Yes, Marster, I tell him how you yer' gone to bed and asleep more'n an hour ago, and he ordered me to come wake you up, and say how it were a matter o' life and death!"

"Life and death? What have I to do with life and death? I won't stir! If the parson wants to see me, he will have to come up here and see me in bed," exclaimed Old Hurricane, sitting the action to the word, by jumping into bed and drawing all the comforts and blankets up around his head and shoulders.

"Must I fetch his reverence up, sar?"

"Yes, I wouldn't get up and go down to see—Washington—Saur zis room, you rascal, or I'll throw the bootjack at your wooden head!"

Wool obeyed with alacrity, and in time to escape the threatened missile.

After an absence of a few minutes he was heard returning, attending upon the footsteps of another. And the next minute he entered, ushering in the Rev. Mr. Goodwin, the parish minister of Bethlehem, St. Mary's.

"How do you do? How do you do? Glad to see you, sir! glad to see you, though obliged to receive you in bed! Fact is, I caught a cold with this severe change of weather, and took a walk ex-negus and went to bed to sweat it off! You'll excuse me? Wool, draw that easy chair up to my bedside for worthy Mr. Goodwin, and bring him a glass of warm negus! It will do him good after his cold ride!"

"I thank you, Major Warfield! I will take the seat, but not the negus, if you please, to-night."

"Not the negus! Oh, come now, you are joking! Why, it will keep you from catching cold, and be a most comfortable night-cap, disposing you to sleep and sweat like a baby! Of course you spend the night with us?"

"I thank you, no. I must take the road again in a few minutes."

"Take the road again to-night! Why, man alive, it is midnight, and the snow driving like all Lapland!"

"Sir, I am sorry to refuse your proffered hospitality, and leave your comfortable roof to-night, and sorrier still to have to take you with me," said the pastor, gravely.

"Take me with you! No, no, my good sir—no, no, that is too good a joke—ha! ha!"

"Sir, I fear that you will find it a very serious one!—Your servant told you that my errand was one of imminent urgency?"

"Yes, something like life and death—"

"Exactly—down in the cabin near the Punch Bowl, there is an old woman dying—"

"There—I knew it! I was just saying there might be an old woman dying! But, my dear sir, what's that to me? What can I do?"

"Humanity, sir, would prompt you!"

"But, my dear sir, how can I help her? I am not a physician to prescribe—"

"She is far past a physician's help!"

"Nor am I priest to hear her confession—"

"Her confession God has already received."

"Well, and I'm not a lawyer to draw up her will!"

"No, sir; but you are recently appointed one of the Justices of the Peace for Alleghany?"

"Well, well, what of that? That does not comprise the duty of getting up out of my warm bed and going through a snow-storm to see an old woman expire."

"I regret to inconvenience you, sir; but in this instance your duty demands your attendance at the bedside of this dying woman—"

"I tell you I can't go, and I won't! Anything in reason, I'll do! Anything I can send, she shall have!—Here! Wool, look in my breeches pocket and take out my purse and hand it! And then go and wake up Mrs. Conditment, and ask her to fill a large basket full of everything a poor old dying woman might want, and you shall carry it!"

"Spare your pains, sir! The poor woman is already past all earthly selfish wants! She only asks your presence at her dying bed."

"But I can't go! If the idea of turning out of my warm bed and exposing myself to a snowstorm this time of night!"

"Excuse me for insisting, sir; but this is an official duty," said the parson, mildly but firmly.

"I'll—I'll throw up my commission to-morrow!" growled the old man.

"To-morrow you may do that! but meanwhile, to-night, being still in the commission of the peace, you are bound to get up and go with me to this woman's bedside."

"And what the demon is wanted of me there?"

"To receive her dying deposition!" Good Heaven! was she murdered, then?"

the old man, in alarm, as he started out of bed and began to draw on his nether garments.

"Be composed—she was not murdered!" said the pastor.

"Well, then, what is it? Dying deposition! It must concern a crime!"

"What crime, for the love of Heaven?"

"I am not at liberty to tell you. She will do that."

"Wool, go down and rouse up Jehu, and tell him to put Parson Goodwin's mule in the stable for the night. And tell him to put the black draught-horses to the close carriage, and light both the front lanterns—for we shall have a dark, stormy road—Saur zis room, you infernal!"

I beg your pardon, parson, but that villain always leaves the door ajar after him."

The good pastor bowed gravely. And the major completed his toilet by the time the servant returned and reported the carriage ready.

It was dark as pitch, when they emerged from the hall-door out into the front portico, before which nothing could be seen but two red bull's eyes of the carriage lanterns, and nothing heard but the dissatisfied whinnying and pawing of the horses.

CHAPTER II.

THE MASKS.

"What are these?
So withered and so wild in their attire
That look not like the inhabitants of earth
And yet are on?"

MACBETH.

"To the Devil's Punch Bowl!"—was the order given by Old Hurricane as he followed the minister into the carriage. "And now, sir, he continued addressing his companion, "I think you had better repeat that part of the church litany that prays to be delivered from 'battle, murder, and sudden death': for if we should be so lucky as to escape Black Donald and his gang, we shall have at least an equal chance of being upset in the darkness of these dreadful mountains."

"A pair of saddle-mules would have been a safer conveyance, certainly," said the minister.

Old Hurricane knew that, though a great sensualist, he was a brave man, and so he had rather risk his life in a close carriage than suffer cold upon a sure-footed mule's back.

Only by previous knowledge of the route could any one have told the way the carriage went. Old Hurricane and the minister both knew that they drove, lumbering, over the rough road leading by serpentine windings down that rugged fall of ground to the river; and that then turning to the left by a short bend, they passed in behind that range of horse-shoe rocks that sheltered Hurricane Hall—thus, as it were, doubling their own road. Beneath that range of rocks, and between it and another range, there was an awful abyss or chasm of cleft, torn and jagged rocks opening as it were from the bowels of the earth,

in the shape of a mammoth bowl, in the bottom of which, almost invisible, from its great depth, seethed and boiled a mass of dark water of which seemed to be a lost river or a subterranean spring. This terrible phenomenon was called the Devil's Punch Bowl.

Not far from the brink of this awful abyss, and close behind the horse-shoes range of rocks, stood a humble log-cabin, occupied by an old free negro, who picked up a scanty living by telling fortunes and showing the way to the Punch Bowl. Her cabin went by name of the Witch's Hut—or Old Hat's cabin. A short distance from Hat's cabin the road became impassable, and the travellers got out, and proceeded by the coachman bearing the lantern, struggled along on foot through the drifted snow and against the buffeting wind and sleet to where a faint light guided them to the house.

The pastor knocked. The door was immediately opened by a negro, whose sex from the strange anomalous costume it was difficult to guess. The tall form was rigged out first in a long, red, cloth petticoat, above which was buttoned a blue cloth skirt. A man's old black beaver hat sat upon the strange head and completed this odd attire.

"Well, hat, how is your patient?" inquired the pastor, "he entered, preceding the magistrate."

"You will see, sir," replied the old woman. The two visitors looked around the dimly-lighted miserable room, in one corner of which stood a low bed, upon which lay extended the form of an old, feeble and gray-haired woman.

"How are you my poor soul, and what can I do for you now I am here?" inquired Old Hurricane, who in the actual presence of suffering was not utterly without pity.

"You are a magistrate?" inquired the dying woman.

"Yes, my poor soul."

"And qualified to administer an oath and take your deposition," said the minister.

"Will it be legal—will it be evidence in a court of law?" asked the woman, lifting her dim eyes to the major.

"Certainly, my poor soul! certainly," said the latter, who, by the way, would have said anything to soothe her.

"Send every one but yourself from the room."

"What, my good soul, send the parson out in the storm? That will never do! Won't it be just as well to let him go up in the corner yonder."

"No! You will repent it unless this communication is strictly private."

"But—my good soul, if it is to be used in a court of law?"

"That will be according to your own discretion!"

"My dear parson," said Old Hurricane, going to the minister, "would you be so good as to retire?"

"There is a fire in the woodshed master," said Hat, leading the way.

"Now, my good soul, now! You want first to be put upon your oath?"

"Yes, sir."

"The old man drew from his great coat pocket a miniature copy of the Scriptures, and with the usual formalities administered the oath."

"Now then, my good soul, begin—the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth you know. But first, your name?"

"Is it possible you don't know me, master?"

"Not I, in fact, I said."

"For the love of Heaven, look at me and try to recollect me sir! It is necessary some one in authority should be able to know me," said the woman, raising her haggard eyes to the face of her visitor.

"The old man adjusted his spectacles and gave her a scrutinizing look, exclaiming at intervals: 'Lord bless my soul! it is it! it ain't it must! it can't be! Granny Grewel, the she—the—midwife that disappeared from here some twelve or thirteen years ago!'"

"Yes, master, I am Nancy Grewel, the ladies' nurse, who vanished from sight so mysteriously some thirteen years ago?" replied the woman.

"Heaven help our brains!" replied the woman. "Was it you ran away? Come—make a clean breast of it, woman. You have nothing to fear in doing so, for you are past the arm of earthly law now!"

"I know it, master."

"And the best way to prepare to meet the Divine Judge is to make all the reparation that you can by a full confession!"

"I know it, sir,—if I had committed a crime; but I have committed no crime, neither did I run away!"

"What? what? what?—What was it then? Remember, witness, you are on your oath!"

"I know that, sir, and I will tell the truth; but it must be in my own way."

At this moment a violent blast of wind and hail roared down the mountain side and rattled against the walls, shaking the witch's hut, as if it would have shaken it about their ears.

It was a proper overture to the tale that was about to be told. Conversation was impossible until the storm raved past and was heard dying in the distance, reverberating echoes from the depths of the Devil's Punch Bowl.

"It is some thirteen years ago," began Granny Grewel, "upon just such a night of storm as this, that I was mounted on my old mule Molly, with my saddle-bags full of dried yams, and stilled waters and such, as I allus carried when I was out to see a lady as was sent for to tend."

"Well, master! I'm not 'blamed to say, as I never was afraid of man, beast, nor spirit, and never stopped at going out all hours of the night, through the most lonesome roads, if so be I was called upon so to do! Still I must say that jest thick, lonesome woods as stands round the old Hidden House in the hollow, I did feel queerish; 'cause it was the dead hour of the night, and it was said how strange things were seen and heard, and done too, in that dark, deep, lonesome place! I seen how even my mule Molly felt queer too, by the way she shook up her ears, stiff as quills. So, partly to keep up my own spirits, and partly to 'courage her, says I, 'Molly,' says I, 'what are ye afraid on? Be a man, Molly!' But Molly stepped out cautious, and pricked up her long ears all the same."

"Well, master, it was so dark I couldn't see a yard past Molly's ears, and the path was so narrow and the bushes so thick we could hardly get along! but just as we came to that little creek as they calls the Spout, cause the water jumps and jets along till it empties into the Punch Bowl, and just as Molly was cautiously putting her forefeet into the water, out starts two men from the bushes and seized poor Molly's bridle!"

"Good heaven!" exclaimed Major Warfield.

"Well, master, before I could cry out one of them willains seized me by the scruff of my neck, and with his other hand upon my mouth, he says:

"Be silent, you old fool, or I'll blow your brains out!"

"And then, master, I saw for the first time that their faces were covered over with black crape. I couldn't a-scream if they'd let me! for my breath was gone and my senses were going along with 'em from the fear that was on me."

"Don't struggle; come along quietly and you shall not be hurt," says the man as had spoke before."

"Struggle! I couldn't a-struggled to a-saved my soul! I couldn't speak! I couldn't breathe! I liked to have a-dropped right off Molly's back. One on 'em says, says he:

"Give her some brandy!" And 'tother takes out a flask and puts it to my lips and says, says he:

"Here, drink this!"

"Well, master, as he had me still by the scruff of the neck I couldn't do no other ways but open my mouth and drink it. And as soon as I took a swallow my breath come back and my speech."

"And oh, gentlemen," says I, 'if it's 'your money or your life,' you mean, I ain't it about me! 'Deed 'clare to the Lord-a-mighty I haint it! I was wrapped up in an old cotton glove in a hole in the plastering in the chimney-corner at home, and if you'll spare my life, you can go there and get it, says he."

"You old blockhead," says they, 'we want neither one nor 'tother! Come along quietly and you shall receive no harm; But at the first cry, or attempt to escape—this shall stop you!' And with that the willain held the muzzle of a pistol so high to my nose that I smelt brimstone, while 'tother held bound a silk handkercher round my eyes, and then took poor Molly's bridle and led her along. I couldn't see, in course, and I das-

aint breathe for fear o' the pistol. But I said my prayers to myself all the time."

"Well, master, they led the mule on down the path until we came to a place wide enough to turn, when they turned us round and led us back onto the wood, and then round and round and up and down, and cress ways and length ways as ef they didn't want me to find where they were taking me."

"Well, sir, when they'd walked about in this 'fused way, leading of the mule about a mile, I knew we was in the woods again—the very same woods and the very same path—I knowed by the feel of the place and the sound of the bushes as we hit up against them each side, and also by the rumbling of the Spout as it tumbled along toward the Punch Bowl. We went down, and down and down, and lower and lower, until we got right down in the bottom of that hollow."

"Then we stopped. A gate was opened. I put up my hand to raise the handkerchief and see where I was; but just at that minute I felt the muzzle o' the pistol like a ring of ice right ag'in my right temple, and the willain growling in my ear:

"If you do—!"

"But I didn't! I dropped my hand down as ef I had been shot, and afore I had seen anything, either. So we went through a gate and up a gravelly walk—I knew it by the crackling of the gravel under Molly's feet—and stopped at a horse-block, where one o' them willains lifted me off. I put up my hand again."

"Do if you dare," says 'tother one, with the muzzle of the pistol at my head."

"I dropped my hand like lead. So they led me on a little way, and then up some steps. I counted them to myself as I went along. They were six. You see, master, I took all this pains to know the house again. Then they opened a door that opened in the middle. Then they went along a passage and up more stairs—there was ten and a turn, and then ten more. Then along another passage, and up another flight of stairs just like the first. Then along another passage and up a third flight of stairs. They was sick."

"Well, sir, here we was at the top o' the house. One o' them willains opened a door on the left side, and 'tother said:

"There—go in and do your duty!" and pushed me through the door, and shut and locked it on me. Good gracious, sir, how scared I was! I slipped off the silk handkercher, and 'tother as I was, didn't forget to put it in my bosom."

"Then I looked about me. Right afore me on the hearth was a weeny table burning, that showed I was in a great big garret with sloping walls. At one end two deep dormer windows, and a black walnut bureau standing between them. At 'tother end a great tester bedstead with dark curtains. There was a dark carpet on the floor. And with all there were so many dark objects and so many shadows, and the little table burned so dimly that I could hardly tell 'tother from which, or keep 'em breaking my nose against things as I groped about."

"And what was in this room for to do? I couldn't even form an idee. But presently my blood ran cold to hear a groan from behind the curtains! I then another! and another! then cry as of some child in mortal agony, saying:

"For the Love of Heaven, save me!"

"I ran to the bed and dropped the curtains, and liked to have fainted at what I saw!"

"And what did you see?" asked the magistrate.

"Master, behind those dark curtains I saw a young creature tossing about on the bed, flinging her fair and beautiful arms about, and tearing wildly at the fine lace that trimmed her night dress. But master, that wasn't her! most made me faint—it was that her right hand was sewed up in black crape, and her whole face and head completely covered with black crape, drawn down and fastened securely around her throat, leaving only a small slit at the lips and nose to breathe through!"

"What! take care, woman! I remember that you are upon your oath!" said the magistrate.

"I know it, master! And as I hope to be forgiven, I am telling the truth!"

"Go on, then."

"Well, sir, also was a young creature, scarcely past childhood, if one might judge by her small size and soft, rosy skin. I remember that she took that black crape from her face and head, but she threw up her hands and exclaimed:

"Oh, no, no, no! for my life no!"
"Well, master, I hardly know how to tell you what followed," said the old woman, hesitating in embarrassment.

"Go right straight on like a ear of Juggernaut, woman! Remember—the whole truth!"
"Well, master in the next two hours there were twins born in that room—a boy and a girl; the boy was dead, the girl living. And all the time I heard the measured tramping of one of them winces up and down the passage outside of that room. Presently the steps stopped, and there was a rap at the door. I went and listened, but did not open it.

"Is it all over?" the voice asked.
"Before I could answer, a cry from the bed caused me to look round. There was the poor masked mother stretching out her white arms towards me in the most imploring way. I hastened back to her.

"Till him—no—no," she said.
"Have you got through?" asked the man at the door, rapping impatiently.
"No, no," said I as directed.
He resumed his tramping up and down, and I went back to my patient. She beckoned me to come close, and whispered:

"Save my child! the living one, I want I hide her! oh hide her from him! When he demands the babe, give him the poor little dead one—he cannot hurt that! And he will not know there was another. Oh I hide and save my child!"

"Master, I was used to queer doings, but this was a little the queerest. But if I was to conceal that second child in order to save it, it was necessary to stop its mouth, for it was squalling like a wild cat. So I took a vial of paragonie from my pocket and gave it a drop, and it went off to sleep like an angel. I wrapped it up warm and lay it along with my shawl and bunched in a dark corner. Just then the man rapped again.

"Come in master," said I.
"No bring me the babe," he said.
"I took up the dead infant. Its mother kissed its brow, and dropped tears upon its little cold face. And I carried it to the man outside.

"Is it asleep?" the villain asked me.
"Yes master," said I, as I put it, well wrapped up, in his arms—"very sound asleep."
"So much the better," said the knave walking away.

"I bolted the door and went back to my patient. With her free hand she seized mine and pressed it to her lips, and then held up her left hand and pointed to the wedding ring upon her third finger.

"Draw it off and keep it off, conceal the child under your shawl, and take her with you when you go! save her, and your fortune shall be made."

"I declare master, I hadn't time to think, before I heard one of them wretches rap at the door.

"Come? get ready to go," he said.

"She also beckoned me. I hastened to her. With eager whispers and imploring gestures she prayed me to take her ring and save her child.

"But you," said I—"who is to attend to you?"
"I do not know or care! Save her!"

"The rapping continued. I ran to the corner where I had left my things. I put on my bonnet, made a sort of sling around my neck of the silk handkerchief, opened the large part of it like a hammock and laid the little sleeping babe there. Then I folded my big shawl around my breast, and nobody any the wiser. The rapping was very impatient.

"I am coming," said I.

"Remember!" whispered the poor girl.

"I will," said I, and went and opened the door. There stood 'tween villain, with his head covered with black creps. I dreamt of nothing but black-headed demons for six months afterwards.

"Are you ready?" says he.

"Yes, your worship," says I.

"Come along, then."

"And biding another silk handkerchief round my eyes, he led me along.

"Instead of my mule, a carriage stood near the horse block.

"Get in," said he, holding the pistol to my ears by way of argument.

"I got in. He jumped up upon the driver's seat and we drove like the wind. In another direction from that in which we came, in course, for there was no carriage road there. The carriage

whirled along at such a rate it made me quite giddy. At last it stopped again. The man in the mask got down and opened the door.

"Where are you taking me?" says I.

"Be quiet," says he, "or—!" And with that he put the pistol to my cheek, ordered me to get out, take the handbag from my eyes, and walk before him. I did so, and saw dimly that we were in a part of the country that I was never at before. We were in a dark road through a thick forest. On the left side of the road in a clearing stood an old house; a dim light was burning in a lower window.

"Go on in there," said the villain, putting the pistol to the back of my head. As the door stood ajar, I went in, to a narrow dark passage, the man all the time at my back. He opened a door on the left side, and made me go into a dark room. Just then the unfortunate child that had been moving restlessly began to wail. Well it might poor, starved thing.

"What's that?" says the miscreant, under his breath, and stopping short.

"It ain't nothing, sir," says I and "hush-h-h" to the baby. But the poor little wretch raised a squall.

"What is the meaning of this?" says he.
"Where did that child come from? Is the demon don't you speak? And with that he seized me again by the scruff of the neck, and shook me.

"Oh, master! for the love of heaven, don't," says I. "This is only a poor unfortunate infant as its parents wanted to get outen the way, and hired me to take care on. And I had had it wrapped up under my shawl all the time 'cept when I was in your house, when I put it to sleep in the corner."

"Humph—and you had that child concealed under your shawl when I first stopped you in the woods?"

"In course, master," says I.

"Whose is it?"

"Master," says I, "it's—it's a dead secret!" for I hadn't another lie ready.

"He broke out into a rude, scornful laugh, and seemed not half to believe me, and yet not to care about questioning me too closely. He made me sit down then in the dark, and went out and turned the key on me. I wet my finger with the paragonie, and put it to the baby's lips to quiet its pains of hunger. Then I heard a whispering in the next room. Now, my eyesight never was good, but to make up for it I believe I had the sharpest ears that ever was, and I don't think anybody could have heard that whispering. I saw a little glimmer of light through the chink, that showed me where the door was, so I crept up to it, and put my ear to the keyhole. Still they whispered so low that no ears could hear them but my sharp ears. The first words I heard good was a grumbling voice asking:

"How old?"

"Fifty—more or less, but strong, active, a good nurse, and a very light minution," says my villain's voice.

"Hm—too old," says the other.

"But I will throw the child in."

"A low, crackling laugh the only answer.

"You mean that would be only a bother. Well, I want to get rid of the pair of them."

"My villain, 'so name the price you are willing to give."

"Cap'n, you and me have had too many transactions together to make any flummery about this. You want to get shot o' them pair. I hain't no objections to turning an honest penny. So just make out the papers—bill o' sale o' the 'oman Kate, or whatsoever her name may be, and the child, with any price you please, so it is only a make-believe price! and I'll engage to take her away, and make the most I can of it in the South—that won't be much, seeing it's only an old woman and child—scarcely a fair profit on the expense o' takin' o' her out. Now, as money's no object to you, Cap'n?"

"Very well, have your own way, only don't let that woman escape and return, for if you do—"

"I understand, Cap'n! but I reckon you needn't threaten, for if you could blow me—why I would return you the same favour," said the other, raising his voice and laughing aloud.

"Be quiet, fool, or come away faster here. And the two villains moved out of even my hearing.

"I should a' born uneasy, master, if it hadn't been the 'oman they were talking about was named Kate, and that wasn't my name, which were well known to be Nancy."

"Presently I heard the carriage drive away. And almost immediately after the door was unlocked, and a great, big, black-bearded and black-headed beast of a ruffian came in, and says he:

"Well, my woman, have you had any supper?"
"No," said I, "I hain't, and if I had any here any length of time, I'd be chumped to you to let me have some hot water and milk to make pap for this perishing baby."

"Follow me," says he.

"And he took me into the kitchen at the back of the house, where there was a fire in the grate, and a cupboard with all that I needed.

Well, sir, not to tire you, I made a nursing bottle for the baby, and fed it. And then I got something for my own supper, or rather, breakfast, for it was now near the dawn of day. Well, sir, I thought I would try to get out and look about myself, to see what the neighbourhood looked like by daylight; but when I tried the door, I found myself locked up, a close prisoner. I looked out of the window, and saw nothing but a little back yard, closed in by the woods. I tried to raise the sash, but it was nailed down. The black-headed monster came in just about that minute, and seeing what I was a-doing, says he:

"Stop that!"

"What am I stopped here for?" says I: "a free 'oman" says I, "a-vent of going about her own business?" says I.

"But he only laughed a loud, crackling, scornful laugh, and went out, turning the key after him.

"A little after sunrise, an old, dried-up spiteful looking hag of a woman came in, and began to get breakfast.

"What am I kept here for?" says I to her.
"But she took no notice at all; nor could I get so much as a single word outen her. In fact, master, the little 'oman was deaf as a post."

"Well, sir, to be short, I was kept in that place all day long, and when night came I was driven into a shanty at the point of the pistol, and rattled along as fast as the horses could gallop over a road as I knew nothing of. We changed horses wunst or twice, and just about the dawn of day we came to a broad river with a vessel lying to, not far from the shore.

"As soon as the shay drew down on the sands, the villain a' had run away with me puts a pipe to his villainous mouth, and blows like mad. Somebody else blowed back from the vessel. Then a boat was put off and rowed ashore. I was forced to get into it, and was followed by the villain. We was rowed to the vessel, and I was driven up the ladder on to the decks. And there, master, right afore my own locking eyes, me and the baby was traded off to the captain! It was no use for me to 'splain or 'spostulate! I wasn't 'bivered. The villain as had stole me got back into the boat and went ashore. And I saw him get into the shay and drive away. It was no use for me to howl and cry, though I did both, for I couldn't even hear myself for the swearing of the captain and the noise of the crew, as they was a gettin' of the vessel under way. Well, sir, we sailed down that river and out to sea.

"Now, sir, come a strange providence, which the very thoughts of it might convert a heathen! We had been to sea about five days when a dreadful storm riz. Oh, master! the inkly blackness of the sky, the roaring of the wind, the raging of the sea, the leaping of the waves, and the rocking of that vessel—and every one in a while, sea and ship all ablaze with the blinding lightning—was a thing to see, not to hear tell of! I tell you, master, that looked like the wrath of God! And then the cursing and swearing and bawling of the captain and the crew, as they were a-takin' in of sail, was enough to raise one's hair on their head! I hugged the baby to my breast—and went to praying as hard as ever I could pray.

"Presently I felt an awful shock, as if heaven and earth had come together, and then everybody screaming, 'She's struck! She's struck!' I felt the vessel trembling like a live creature, and the water a pouring in everywhere. I hugged the babe and scrambled up the companion way to the deck. It was pitch dark, and I heard every man rushing towards one side of the vessel.

CHAPTER III.

THE QUEST.

Then did Sir Knight abandon dwelling,
And out he rode.

HURDISMAN.

Premature to the owners of Major Warfield, the corpse of the old mistress was the next day after her decease brought over and quietly interred in the family graveyard of Hurricane Hall.

And then Major Warfield bestowed his household by giving orders to his housekeeper and his body-servant to prepare his wardrobe and pack his trunks for a long journey to the north.

"What can the Major be thinking of, to be setting out for the north at this time of the year?" exclaimed good little Mrs. Conditment, as she picked over her employer's shirts, selecting the newest and warmest to be done-up for the occasion.

"Lord Almighty only knows; but 'pears to me master's never been right in his head-piece since Hollow-eve night, when he took that ride to the Witte's Hut," replied Wool, who, with brush and sponge, was engaged in rejuvenating his master's outer-garments.

But let his family wonder as they would, Old Hurricane kept his own counsel—only just as he was going away, lest mystery should lead to investigation, and that to discovery, the old man gave out that he was going north to invest capital in bank-stock and so, quite unattended, he departed.

His servant, Wool, indeed, accompanied him as far as Tip-Top, the little hamlet on the mountain at which he was to meet the eastern stage; but there, having seen his master comfortably deposited in the inside of the coach, and the luggage safely stowed in the boot, Wool was ordered to return with the carriage. And Major Warfield proceeded on his journey alone. This also caused much speculation in the family.

"Who's going to make his punch and warm his bed and put his slippers on the hearth and hang his gown to de fire—that's what I want to know!" cried the indignant Wool.

"Oh, the waiters at the taverns where he stops can do that for him," said Mrs. Conditment.

"No, they can't, neither! they don't know his ways! they don't know nuffin 'bout him? / 'clare, / think our ole marse done gone 'lean crazy! / shouldn't be s'prised 'he'd gone off to de north to get married, and to be bring home a young wife we-dem!"

"Fut! fut! fut! such talk—that will never do!" exclaimed the deeply-shocked Mrs. Conditment.

"Worry well! all / says is, 'Dem as libe longest will see most!'" said Wool, shaking his white head. After which undeniable apothegm the conversation came to a stand.

Meanwhile, old Hurricane pursued his journey—a lumbering, old-fashioned stage-coach ride—across the mountains, creeping a snail's crawl up one side of the precipice and clattering thunderously down the other at a headlong speed that pitched the back-seat passengers into the bosoms of the front ones, and threatened even to cast the coach over the heads of the horses. Three days and nights of such rugged riding brought the traveler to Washington City, where he rested one night, and then took the cars for New York. He rested another night in Philadelphia, resumed his journey by the first train in the morning, and reached New York about noon.

The crowd the noise, the hurry and confusion at the wharf almost drove this irascible old gentleman mad!

"No! confound you!"

"I'll see your neck stretched first, you villain!" "Out of my way or I'll break your head, sirrah!" were some of his responses to the solicitous attentions of cabmen and porters. At length, taking up his heavy carpet-bag in both hands, Old Hurricane began to lay about him, with such effect that he speedily cleared a passage for himself through the crowd. Then addressing a coachman who had not offended, by speaking first, he said:

"Here, sir! Here are my checks! Go get my luggage and take it to the Astor House. Hand the clerk this card, and tell him I want a good, room well warmed. I shall take a walk around the city before going. And hark ye! If one of my trunks is missing, I'll have you hanged, you rogue!"

"A flash of lightning, that made everything as bright as day again, showed me that they were all taking to the boat. I rushed after, calling to them to save me and the baby. But no one seemed to hear me; they were all too busy trying to save themselves and keep others out of the boat, and all cursing and swearing and hollering that there was no more room; that the boat would be swamped, and so on. The end was, that all who could crowd into the boat did so. And me and the baby and a poor sailor lad and the black cook were left behind to perish."

But, master, as it turned out, we as was left to die were the only ones saved. We watched after the boat with longing eyes, though we said only as it when the lightning flashed. And every time we saw it, it was further off. At last, master, a flash of lightning showed us the boat as far off as ever we could see her, capsize and it beater hither and thither by the wild waves—its crew had perished."

"Master, as soon as the sea had swallowed up that wretched captain and crew, the wind died away, the waves fell, and the storm lulled—just as if it had done what it was sent to do and was satisfied. The wreck—where we poor forlorn ones stood—the wreck that had shivered and trembled with every wave that struck it—until we had feared it would break up every minute, became still and firm on its sand-bar, as a house on dry land."

"Daylight came at last. And a little after sunrise we saw a sail bearing down upon us. We could not signal the sail, but by the mercy of Providence, she saw us and lay to, and sent off a boat, and picked us up and took us on board—me and the baby, and the cook and the sailor lad."

"It was a foreign vessel, and we could not understand a word they said, nor they us. All we could do was by signs. But they were very good to us, dried our clothes and gave us breakfast, and made us lie down and rest. And then put about and continued their course. The sailor lad—Herbert Greyson—soon found out and told me they were bound for New York. As, in fact, master, in about ten days we made that port."

"When the ship anchored below the Battery, the officers and passengers made me up a little bundle of clothes, and a little purse of money, and put me ashore, and there I was in a strange city, so bewildered I didn't know which way to turn. While I was a-standing there, in danger of being run over by the omnibuses, the sailor-boy came to my side and told me that he and the cook was going to engage on board of another American vessel, and asked me what I was going to do. I told him how I didn't know what I should do. Then he said he'd show me where I could go and stay all night, and so he took me into a little by-street to a poor-looking house, where the people took lodgers, and there he left me to go about my ship. As he went away he advised me to take care of my money, and try to get a servant's place."

"Well, master, I aint a gwyne to bother you with telling you of how I toiled and struggled along in that great city—first living out as a servant, and afterwards renting a room and taking in washing and ironing—aye! how I toiled and struggled—for—ten—long—years, hoping for the time to come when I should be able to return to this neighborhood, where I was known, and expose the evil deeds of them villains. And for this cause I lived on toiling and struggling, and laying up money, penny by penny. Sometimes I was fool enough to tell my story in the hopes of getting pity and help—but telling my story always made it worse for me! some thought me crazy and others thought me deceitful, which is not to be wondered at, for I was a stranger, and my adventures were indeed beyond belief."

"No one ever helped me but the lad, Herbert Greyson. Whenever he came from sea, he sought me out, and made a little present to me or Cap."

"Cap, master, was Capitola, the child. The reason I gave that name was because on that night I had drawn from the masked mother's hand were the two names—Eugene—Capitola."

"Well, master, the last time Herbert Greyson came home, he gave me five dollars, and that, with what I had saved, was enough to pay my passage to Norfolk."

"I'll be in the care of the people of the house—she was big enough to pay for her keep in work—and I took passage for Norfolk."

When I got there I fell ill, spent all my money, and was at last taken to the poor house. Six months passed away before I was discharged. And then six more before I had earned and saved money enough to pay my way on here."

"I reached here three days ago, and found a wheat-field growing where my cottage fire used to burn, and all my old cronies dead, all except old Hat, who has received and given me shelter. Sure, my story is done—make what you can of it!" said the invalid, sinking down in her bed as if utterly exhausted.

Old Hurricane, whose countenance had expressed emotions as powerful as they were various while listening to this tale, now arose, stepped cautiously to the door, drew the bolt, and coming back, bent his head and asked:

"What more of the child?"

"Cap, sir, I have not heard a word of Cap since I left her to try to find out her friends. But any one interested in her might inquire for her at Mrs. Simmon's, laundress, No. 8 Rag Alley."

"You say the names upon that ring were—Eugene—Capitola?"

"Yes, sir, they were."

"Have you that ring about you?"

"No master, I thought it was best in case of accidents to leave it with the child."

"Have you told her any part of this strange story?"

"No, master, nor hinted it; she was too young for such a confidence."

"You were right! Had she any mark about her person by which she could be identified?"

"Yes, master, a very strange one. In the middle of her left palm was the perfect image of a crimson hand, about half an inch in length."

There was also another. Herbert Greyson, to please me, marked upon her fore-arm in Indian ink her name and birth-day—Capitola, Oct. 31st, 1832."

"Right! Now tell me, my good soul, do you know, from what you were enabled to observe, what house that was where Capitola was born?"

"I am on my oath! No, sir, I do not know—"

"You suspect?"

"The woman nodded."

"It was—"

"said old Hurricane, stooping and whispering a name that was heard by no one but the sick woman."

She nodded again, with a look of intense meaning.

"Does your old hostess here, Hat, know or suspect anything of this story?" inquired Major Warfield.

"Not a word! No soul but yourself has heard it!"

"That is right! Still be discreet! If you would have the wicked punished and the innocent protected, be silent and wary. Have no anxiety about the girl! What can she do for her, will I do and quickly! And now, good creature, day is actually dawning. You must seek repose. And I must call the parson in and return home. I will send Mrs. Conditment over with food, wine, no offense, clothing, and every comfort for your condition requires," said old Hurricane, rising, and calling in the clergyman, with whom he soon after left the hut for home.

They reached Hurricane Hall in time for an early breakfast, where the astonished housekeeper had prepared, and for which their night's adventures had certainly given them a good appetite.

Major Warfield kept his word, and as soon as breakfast was over he dispatched Mrs. Conditment with a carriage filled with provisions for the sick woman. But they were not needed. In a couple of hours the housekeeper returned with the intelligence that the old nurse was dead. The false strength of mental excitement that enabled her to tell so long and dreadful a tale, had been the last flaring up of the flame of life, that almost immediately went out.

"I am sorry, upon the whole, for now I shall have the game in my own hands!" muttered old Hurricane to himself. "At! Gabrielle Le Noir! better you had cast yourself down from the highest rock of this rampart than be dashed to pieces below, than have thus fallen into my power!"

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"Breach of trust isn't a hanging matter in New York, your honor," laughed the hackman, as he touched his hat and hurried off towards the crowd collected around the baggage car.

Old Hurricane made a step or two, as if he would have pursued and punished the delinquency of the man; but finally thought better of it, picked up his portmanteau and walked up the street slowly, with frequent pauses and bewildered looks, as though he had forgotten his direction, or lost his way, and yet hesitated to inquire of any one for the obscure little alley in which he had been told to look for his treasure.

CHAPTER IV.

CAPITOLA.

Her box a page's dress belied,
Obscured her charms but could not hide.

"Please, sir, do you want your carpet-bag carried?" asked a voice near.

Old Hurricane looked around him with a puzzled air, for he thought that a young girl had made this offer, so soft and clear were the notes of the voice that spoke.

"It was I, sir," said the same voice, and every body's service, sir!"

And turning, Old Hurricane saw sitting astride a pile of boxes at the corner store, a very ragged lad, some thirteen years of age.

"Good gracious!" thought Old Hurricane, as he gazed upon the boy, "this must be crown-prince and heir-apparent to the king of shreds and patches."

"Well, old gent, you'll know me next time, that's certain!" said the boy returning the look with interest.

It is probable that Old Hurricane did not hear this irreverent speech, for he continued to gaze with pity and dismay upon the ragamuffin before him. He was a handsome boy, too, notwithstanding the deplorable state of his wardrobe. Thick, clustering curls of jet black hair fell in tangled disorder around a forehead broad, white and smooth as that of a girl; slender and gracefully mischievous dark gray eyes, that sparkled beneath the shade of long, thick, black lashes; a little turned-up nose, and red, pointing lips, completed the character of a countenance full of fun, frolic, spirit, and courage.

"Well, governor, if you've looked long enough, maybe you'll take me into service!" said the lad, had gathered at the corner.

"Dear! I dear! dear! look at the looks as if he had never in his life seen soap and water or a suit of whole clothes!" ejaculated the old gentleman, adding, kindly,—"Yes, I reckon I will give you the job, my son!"

"His son! Oh, crickey, do you hear that, fellows? His son! Oh, Lor! my governor's turned up at last. I'm his son! Oh, gosh! But what did I tell you? I always had a sort of impression that I must have had a father in some former period of my life; and, behold, here he is! Who that isn't likely. Still, I'll ask him:—How's the old woman, sir?" said the news-boy, jumping off the boxes and taking the carpet-bag in his hand.

"What are you talking about, you infatuated tatterdemelon? Come along! If it weren't for pity, I'd have you put in the pillory!" exclaimed Old Hurricane, shaking his cane at the offender.

"Thanky, sir! I've not had a pillow under my head for a long time!"

"Silence, ragamuffin!"

"Just so sir! A dumb devil is better than a talking one!" answered the lad, demurely, following his employer.

They went on some distance, Old Hurricane diligently reading the names of the streets at the corners. Presently, he stopped again, bewildered, and after gazing around himself for a few minutes, said:

"Boy!"

"Yes, sir!"

"Do you know such a place as Rag Alley, in Main Street?"

"Rag Alley, sir?"

"Yes; a sort of narrow, dark, musty place, with a row of old tumble-down tenements each side,

where poor wretches live all huddled up together, fifty in a house, eh?—I was told I couldn't drive up in a carriage, so I had to walk! Do you know such a place?"

"Do I know such a place! Do I know Rag Alley?—Oh my eye! Oh, he! he! he!"

"What are you laughing at now, you miscreantous assortment of variegated pieces?"

"Oh! oh, dear! I was laughing to think how well I knew Rag Alley."

"Humph! you do look as if you were born and bred there."

"Humph! I wasn't."

"Humph! how did you get into life, then?"

"I don't know, governor, unless I was raked up from a gutter by some old woman in the rag-picking line," said the newsboy, demurely.

"Humph! I don't think that quite likely. But now, do you say that you know where that alley is?"

"Oh, don't set me off again! Oh, he, he, he!—Yes, sir, I know."

"Well, then, show me the way, and don't be a fool!"

"I'd scorn to be it, sir. This is the way," said the lad, taking the lead.

They walked on several squares, and then the boy stopped, and pointing down a cross-street, said:

"There, governor, there you are!"

"There! Where?—Why, that's a handsome street! said Old Hurricane, gazing up in admiration at the opposite blocks of stately brown stone mansions.

"That's it, however. That's Rag Alley. Hifalutin Terrace! Then tenements you talk of were pulled down more'n a year ago, and these houses put up in their place," said the newsboy.

"Dear! dear! dear! what changes! And Hurricane, gazing in dismay at the iron rods of iron."

"The tenants!—poor wretches! How do I know? Carted away, blown away, thrown away with the other rubbish! What became of the tenants?"

"Ask of the winds that far around—
With fragments strewed the sea-tye!"

I heard that he shouted at a school exhibition once, governor," said the boy, demurely.

"Humph! well, well, the trace is lost! What shall I do?—put advertisements in the daily papers—apply at the chief police office, Yes, I'll do both," muttered Old Hurricane, to himself.

Then, speaking out, he called:

"Yes, sir."

"Call me a coach."

"Yes, sir." And the lad was off like an arrow to do his bidding.

In a few moments the coach drove up. The newsboy, that was sitting beside the driver, jumped down, and said:

"Here it is, sir."

"Thank you, my son. Here is your fee," said Old Hurricane, putting a silver dollar into the lad's hand.

"What! Lor! It can't be! but it is! He must have made a mistake! What if he did, I don't care. Yes I do too. 'Honor bright,' exclaimed the newsboy, looking in wonder and desire and sore temptation upon the larger piece of money he had ever touched in his life.

"Governor!"

"Well, boy," said the old gentleman, with his feet upon the steps of the coach.

"You've been and done and gone and give me a whole dollar by mistake!"

"And why should you think it a mistake, you impertinent monkey?"

"Your honor didn't want it!"

"Why not, you young rascal?—of course I did. Take it and be of with you!" said Old Hurricane, beginning to ascend the steps.

"I'm a great mind to!" said the newsboy, still gazing on the coin with satisfaction and desire:

"I'm a mind to! but I won't! Taint fair—Governor, I say!"

"What now, you troublesome fellow?"

"Do stop a minute! Don't tempt me too hard! I was tempted too hard."

"What do you mean now, you ridiculous little ape?"

"I mean I know you're from the country, and don't know better, and I mustn't impose upon your ignorance."

"My ignorance, you impudent villain!" exclaimed the old man, with rising wrath.

"Yes, governor; you hint out your eye teeth yet! you hint up to snuff! you don't know nothing! Why, that is too much for totting a carpet-bag a half a dozen squares! and it's very well you impose on your innocence! Bless you, the usual price isn't more than a dime, or if you're rich and generous, a shilling, but—"

"What the dence do I care for the usual price, you—you perfect prodigy of patches!—there, for the Lord's sake, go get yourself a decent suit of clothes. Drive on, coachman!" roared Old Hurricane, flinging an eagle upon the side-walk, and rolling off in his cab.

"Poor, dear, old gentleman! I wonder where his *Angels* is? How could he have got *lost*? Maybe I'd better go and tell the police! But then I'm very crazy, and I'm afraid he'll fling away every cent of his money before his friends can catch him! I know what I'll do! I'll go to the stand the driver what he has done with the poor, dear old fellow!" said the newsboy, picking up the gold coin, and putting it into his pocket. And then he started, but with an eye to his business, singing out:

"Herald! Herald! Express! last account of the orful accident—steamer! etc., etc., etc. He found the coachman already there. And to his anxious inquiries as of the sanity of the old gentleman, that John replied:

"Oh bless your soul, crazy? no! no more'n you or I. He's a real nob! a real Virginian, F. F. V., with money like the sands on the sea-shore. Keep the tin, lad—he knewed what he was a-doin' on!"

"Oh! it—it most scares me to have so much money!" exclaimed the boy, half in delight, half in dismay; "but to-night I'll have a warm supper and sleep in bed once more! And to-morrow a new suit of clothes! So here goes—"

"Herald!—Express! full account—the horrible murder—Bell street—Ledge-*ce-*ce**, etc., etc., etc., crying his papers until he was out of hearing.

Never in his life had the newsboy felt so prosperous and happy.

CHAPTER V.

THE DISCOVERY.

"And at the magistrate's command
They next untied the leathern band
That bound her tresses there,
And down her slender form there spread
Black ringlets rich and rare."

Old Hurricane meanwhile dined at the public table at the Astor, and afterwards went to his room, to rest, smoke and ruminate. And he finished the evening by supping and retiring to bed.

In the morning, after an early breakfast, he wrote a dozen advertisements, and called a coach and rode around to leave them with the various daily papers for immediate publication. Then, to lose no time, he rode up to the Recorder's office to set the police upon the search.

As he was about to enter the front portal, he observed the doorway and passage blocked up with even a larger crowd than usual.

And seeing the coachman who had waited upon him the previous day, he inquired of him—

"What is the matter here?"

"Nothing, your honor, 'cept a boy tuk up for wearing girls' clothes, or a girl took up for wearing boys'!" I dunno which," said the man touching his hat.

"Let me pass then, I must speak to the chief of police," said Old Hurricane, shoving his way into the Recorder's room.

"This is not him the office of the chief, sir; you will find him on the other side of the hall," said a by-stander.

But before Old Hurricane had gathered the sense of these words, a sight within the office drew his steps thither. Up before the Recorder stood a lad of about thirteen years, who, despite his smart new suit of gray casinet, his long rolling black singlets, and his down cast and blushing face, Old

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Hurricane immediately recognized as his acquaintance of the preceding day, the saucy young tattle-tale.

"Feeling sorry for the friendless boy, the old man impulsively went up to him and patted him on the shoulder, saying:

"What! in trouble, my lad? never mind—never look down! I'll warrant you an honest lad from what I've seen myself! I'll see you through, my lad!"

"Lord! Lord bless your soul, sir, he's no more a lad than you or I. The young rascal is a girl in boy's clothes, sir!" said the officer who had the culprit in custody.

"What—what—what!" exclaimed Old Hurricane, gazing in consternation from the young prisoner to the officer: "What—what! my news-boy, my sassy little prince of patches, a girl in boy's clothes!"

"Yes, sir—a young scoundrel. I actually twigg'd him selling papers at the Fulton Ferry this morning! A little rascal!"

"A girl in boy's clothes! A girl!" exclaimed Old Hurricane, with his eyes nearly starting out of his head.

Just then the young culprit looked up in his face with an expression half melancholy, half mischievous, that appealed to the rugged heart of the old man. Turning around to the policeman, he started the whole office by roaring out: "A girl in boy's clothes, or demmy, sir! whether a girl in boy's clothes, or men's clothes, or soldier's clothes, or tailor's clothes, or any clothes, or no clothes, sir! I treat her with the delicacy due to womanhood, sir! say, and the tenderness owed to childhood! for she is but a bit of a poor, friendless, motherless, fatherless child, lost and wandering in your great Babylon! No more hard words to her, sir—or by the overboard!"

"Order," put in the calm and dignified Recorder.

Old Hurricane, though his face was still purple, his veins swollen and his eyeballs glaring with anger, immediately recovered himself, turned and bowed to the Recorder and said:

"Yes, sir, I will keep order, if you'll make that brute of a policeman reform his language."

And so saying, Old Hurricane subsided into a seat, immediately behind the child, to watch the examination.

"What'll they do with her, do you think?" he inquired of a bystander.

"Sent her to the workhouse."

"Up to—where?"

"To Blackwell's Island—to the workhouse, in course."

"To the workhouse—her, that child!—the wretches! Um—um—me! Oh-h-h-h!" groaned Old Hurricane, stooping and burying his shaggy, gray head in his great hands.

He felt his shoulder touched, and looking up saw that the little prisoner had turned around, and was about to speak to him.

"Governor," said the same clear voice that he had even at first supposed to belong to a girl—

"Governor, don't you keep on letting out that way! You don't know nothing! You're in the Recorder's Court! If you don't mind your eyes they'll commit you for contempt!"

"Will they? Then they'll do well! I tell you, I mean, I plead guilty to contempt. Send a child like you to the—! They can't do it! Simply, they can't do it! I—Major Warfield of Virginia—tell you so, my boy—girl, I mean!"

"But, you innocent old lion, instead of freeing me, you'll find yourself shut up between four walls and very narrow ones at that, I tell you! You'll think yourself in a coffin! Governor, they call it 'The Tomb'!" whispered the child.

"Attention!" said the clerk.

The little prisoner turned and faced the court. "The old lion" hurried his shaggy gray head up board in his hands, and groaned aloud.

"Now, then, what is your name, my lad—my girl, I should say?" inquired the clerk.

"Capitola, sir."

Old Hurricane picked up his ears and raised his head, muttering to himself:—"Cap-it-la! That's a very odd name. Can't surely be two in a world of the same. Cap-it-la—it is what my Capitola, after all, I shouldn't worry at all! I'll listen, and say nothing."

And this wise resolution Old Hurricane again shook his head upon his hands.

"Say your name is Capitola—Capitola."

what?" inquired the clerk, continuing the examination.

"Nothing, sir."

"Nothing! What do you mean?"

"I have no name but Capitola, sir."

"Who is your father?"

"Never had any that I know, sir."

"Your mother?"

"Never had a mother either, sir, as ever I heard."

"Where do you live?"

"About in spots, in the city, sir."

"Oh—oh—oh!" groaned Old Hurricane with his hands.

"What is your calling?" inquired the clerk.

"Selling newspapers, carrying portmanteaus and packages, sweeping before doors, clearing off snow, blacking boots, and so on."

"Little odd jobs in general, eh?"

"Yes, sir, anything that I can turn my hand to, and get to do."

"Boy—girl! I should say—what tempted you to put yourself into male attire?"

"Sir?"

"In boy's clothes then?"

"Oh, yes—want, sir—and—danger, sir," cried the little prisoner, putting her hands to her face crimson with blushes, and for the first time since her arrest upon the eve of sobbing.

"Oh—oh—oh!" groaned Old Hurricane from his chair.

"What! Danger! How is that?" continued the clerk.

"Your honor mightn't like to know."

"By all means. It is, in fact, necessary that you should give an account of yourself," said the clerk.

Old Hurricane once more raised his head, opened his ears, and gave close attention.

One circumstance he had particularly remarked—the language used by the poor child during her examination was much superior to the slang she had previously affected, to support her assumed character of newsboy.

"Well, well—why do you pause? Go on—go on, my good boy—girl I mean," said the Recorder, in a tone of kind encouragement.

CHAPTER VI.

A SHORT, SAD STORY.

"Ah! poverty is a weary thing. It burdens the brain. It maddens even the little child. To murmur and complain."

"It is not much I have to tell," began Capitola. "I was brought up in Rag Alley and its neighborhood, by an old woman named Nancy Grewell."

"Ah!" ejaculated Old Hurricane.

"She was a washerwoman and rented one scantily-furnished room from a poor family named Simmons."

"Oh!" cried Old Hurricane.

"Granny as I called her, was very good to me, and I never suffered cold, nor hunger, until about eighteen months ago, when granny took it into her head to go down to Virginia."

"Humph!" exclaimed Old Hurricane.

"When Granny went away, she left me a little money and some good clothes, and told me to be sure and stay with the people where she left me, for that she would be back in about a month. But, your honor, that was the very last I ever saw or heard of poor granny. She never came back again; and by that I know she must have died."

"Ah-h-h!" breathed the old man, puffing fast.

"The first month or two after Granny left, I did well enough. And then, when the little money was gone, I sat with the Simmons's, and did little odd jobs for my food. But by never came back again; and by that I know she must have died."

"Where there no customers of your grand-mother that you could have applied to for employment?"

"No, sir. My granny's customers were mostly boarders at the small taverns, and they were always changing. I did apply to two or three houses

where the landladies knew granny; but they didn't want me."

"Oh—oh—oh!" groaned Major Warfield, in the tone of one in great pain.

"I wouldn't have that old fellow's conscience for a good deal," whispered a spectator, "for, as sure as shooting, that gal's his unlawful child."

"Well—go on. What next?" asked the clerk.

"Well, sir, though the Simmons's had nothing to give me except a crust now and then, they still let me sleep in the house, for the little jobs I could do for them. But at last Simmons got work on the railroad a way off somewhere, and they all moved away from the city."

"And you were left alone?"

"Yes, sir, I was left alone in the empty, unfurnished house. Still it was a shelter, and I was glad of it, and I dreaded the time when it would be rented by another tenant, and I should be turned into the street."

"Oh! oh! oh, Lord," groaned the Major.

"But it was never rented again; for the word went around that the whole row was to be pulled down; and so I thought I had leave to stay, at least as long as the rats did," continued Capitola, with somewhat of her natural roguish humor twinkling in her dark, gray eyes.

"But how did you get your bread?" inquired the Recorder.

"Did not get it at all, sir. Bread was too dear! I sold my clothes, piece by piece, to the old man over the way, and bought corn meal, and picked up trash to make a fire, and cooked a little mush every day in an old tin that had been left behind. And so I lived on for two or three weeks. And then when my clothes were all gone—except one suit I had upon my back—and my meal was almost out, instead of making mush every day, I economized and made gruel."

"But my boy—my good girl, I mean—before you became so destitute, you should have found something or other to do," said the Recorder.

"Sir, I was trying to get jobs every hour in the day. I'd have done anything honest, but they didn't want a girl. Some of the good-natured landladies said, if I was a boy now, they could keep me opening oysters, but as I was a girl, they had no work for me. I even went to the offices to get papers to sell, but they told me that crying papers was not proper work for a girl. I even went down to the ferry-boats and watched for the passengers coming ashore, and ran and offered to carry their carpet-bags or portmanteaus; but some growled at me, and others laughed at me, and one old gentleman asked me if I thought he was a North American Indian, to strap up Broadway with a female behind him carrying his goods."

"Sir, while all the ragged boys I know could get little jobs to earn bread, I, because I was a girl, was not allowed to carry a gentleman's parcel, or black his boots, or shovel the snow off a shopkeeper's pavement, or put in coal, or do anything that I could do just as well as they. And so because I was a girl, there seemed to be nothing but starvation or beggary before me."

"Oh, Lord! oh Lord! that such things should be!" cried Old Hurricane.

"That was bad, sir! but there was worse behind! There came a day when my meal—even the last dust of it, was gone! Then I kept life in me by drinking water, and by wiping all I could. At first I could not sleep for the gnawing—gnawing—in my stomach; but afterwards I slept deeply, from exhaustion, and then I'd dream of feasts and the richest sort of food, and of eating such quantities! and really, sir, I seemed to taste it and enjoy it and get the good of it—almost as much as if it were all true! One morning after such a dream I was awakened up by a great noise, outside. I staggered upon my feet and crept to the window! and there, sir, were the workmen all outside, a pulling down the house over my head!"

"Good Heaven!" ejaculated Old Hurricane, who seemed to constitute himself the chorus of this drama.

"Sir, they didn't know that I or any one was in the empty house! Fright gave me strength to run down stairs and run out. Then I stopped. Oh! I stopped and looked up and down the street! What should I do? The last shelter was gone away from me!—the house where I had lived so many years, and that seemed like a friend to me, was falling before my very eyes! I thought I'd just go and pitch myself into the river, and cut it all!"

"That was a very wicked thought," said the Recorder.

"Yes, sir, I know it was; and besides, I was dreadfully afraid of being suffocated in the dirty water around me," said Capitola, with a sparkle of irrepressible humor that effaced even through all her troubles. "Well, sir, during that day, I found a five-cent piece in the river mud as long as it lasted. So I bought a look for a job. I looked all day, but found none, and when night came I went into a lumber-yard, and hid myself behind a pile of planks that kept the wind off me, and I went to sleep and dreamed a beautiful dream of living in a handsome house, with friends all around me, and everything good to eat and drink, and what?"

"Poor, poor child! but your dream may come true yet!" muttered Old Hurricane to himself.

"Well, your Honor, next day I spent another penny out of my half-dime, and looked in vain for a cubby-hole, and slept at night in a broken-down straw. And so, not to tire your patience, a whole week passed away. I did not on my half-dime, spending a penny a day for a meal, until the half-dime was gone, and sleeping, until the wherever I could—sometimes under the front stoop of a house, sometimes in an old broken carriage, and sometimes behind a pile of boxes on the sidewalk!"

"That was a dreadful exposure for a young girl," said the Recorder.

A burning flush flamed over the young creature's cheek, as she answered:

"Yes, sir, that was the worst of all; that finally drove me to putting on boy's clothes."

"Oh, sir, about it?"

"Let us hear it, please!"

"Yes, sir—I can't—I—how can I? Well, being always exposed, sleeping out-doors, I was often in danger of bad boys and bad men," said Capitola, and dropping her head down upon her hands, and covering her crimson cheeks with her hands, for the first time she burst into tears and sobbed aloud.

"Come, come, my little man! my good little woman, I mean—don't take it so to heart! You couldn't help it!" said Old Hurricane with rain-drops glittering even in his own stormy eyes.

Capitola looked up with her whole countenance flashing with spirit and exclaimed, "Oh! but I took care of myself, sir! I did, indeed, your Honor! You mustn't, either you or the old gentleman, dare to think but what I did."

"Oh, of course of course!" said a bystander, laughing.

Old Hurricane sprang up, bringing his feet down upon the floor with a resound that made the hall ring again, exclaiming:

"What do you mean by 'of course,' of course, you villain? Demmy! I'll swear she took care of herself, you varlet; and if any man dares to hint otherwise, I'll ram his falsehood down his throat with the point of my walking stick, and make him swallow it both!"

"Order, order!" said the clerk.

Old Hurricane immediately wheeled to the right-about, faced and saluted the bench in military fashion, and then said:

"Yes, sir! I'll regard order! but in the meanwhile, if the court does not protect this child from insult, I must, order or no order! and with that the old gentleman once more subsided into his seat."

"Governor, don't you be so noisy! You'll get yourself stopped up into a jug next! Why you need to talk about that they called Old Hurricane, because he was so stormy!" whispered Capitola, turning towards him.

"Humph! she's heard of me, then," muttered the old gentleman to himself.

"Well, sir—I mean Miss—go on!" said the clerk addressing Capitola.

"Yes, sir. Well, your honor at the end of five days, being a certain Thursday morning, when I couldn't get a job of work for love nor money, when my last penny was spent for my last roll—and my last roll was eaten up—and I was dreadfully hungry by day, and the horror of the night, I thought to myself, if I were only a boy, I might carry packages, and shovel in coal, and do lots of jobs by day, and sleep with-

out terror at night! And then I felt bitter against fate for not making me a boy! And so thinking and thinking and thinking, I wandered on until I found myself in Rag Alley, where I broken bricks, plaster and lumber, that used to be my home, and the old pawnbroker's shop where I sold my clothes for meal. And then, all of a sudden, a bright thought struck me: and I made up my mind to be a boy!"

"Made up your mind to be a boy!"

"Yes, sir, for it was so easy! I wondered how I came to be so stupid as not to have thought of it before! I just ran across to the old shop, and offered to swap my suit of girl's clothes, that was suit of boy's clothes he had, whether they'd fit me or not, so they would only stay on me. The thought I had been stealing and wanted to dodge the police. So he took down an old, not very ragged, suit that he said would fit me, an open-room and put 'em on."

"Well, sir, to tire your honors, I went into that little back parlor a jacket, and I came out a boy, with pants and shirt, with my hair cut short and a cap on my head! The pawnbroker gave me a penny roll and a sapphire for my black ringlets."

"All seemed gnat that came to his mill!" said Old Hurricane.

"Yes, Governor, he was a dealer in general. Well, the first thing I did was to hire myself to him, at a sixpence a day, and find myself, to shovel in his coal. That didn't take me but a day. So at night he paid me, and I sleep in a behind a stack of boxes. Next morning I was up before the sun, and went to the office of the little penny paper, the 'Morning Star.' I bought two dozen of 'em, and ran as fast as I could to the ferry-boats to sell to the early passengers. Well, sir, in an hour's time I had sold out, and pocketed just two shillings, and felt myself on the high road to fortune!"

"And so that was the way by which you came to put yourself in male attire?"

"Yes, sir! and the only thing that made me feel sorry, was to see what a fool I had been, not to turn to a boy before, when it was so easy! And from that day forth I was happy and prosperous! I found plenty to do! I carried carpet-bags, hauled horses, put in coal, cleaned sidewalks, blacked gentlemen's boots, and did everything an honest boy could turn his hand to! And so for more than a year I was as happy as a king, and should have kept on so, only I forgot and let my hair grow, and instead of cutting it off, just tucked it up under my cap; and so this morning, or the ferry-boat, in a high breeze, the wind blew off my cap, and the policeman blazed on me!"

"'Twasn't altogether her long hair, your honor; for I had seen her before, having known her when she lived with old Mrs. Grewell, in Rag Alley," interrupted the officer.

"You may sit down, my child," said the Recorder in a tone of encouragement.

CHAPTER VII.

METAMORPHOSIS OF THE NEWS-BOY.

With caution judge of probability.
Things seemed unlikely, even impossible,
Experience oft had proved to be true.

SHAKESPEARE.

"What shall we do with her?" inquired the Recorder, *scotus voce*, of a brother magistrate who appeared to be associated with him on the bench.

"Send her to the Refuge," replied the other, in the same tone.

"What are they consulting about?" asked Old Hurricane, whose ears were not of the best.

"They are talking of sending her to the Refuge," answered a by-stander.

"Refuge? Is there a Refuge for destitute children in New York? Then Babylon is not so bad as I thought it. What is this Refuge?"

"It is a prison where juvenile delinquents are trained to habits of—"

"A prison! send her to a prison! never!" burst forth Old Hurricane, rising and marching up to the Recorder.

He stood hat in hand before him, and said: "Your Honor, if a proper legal guardian ap-

pears to claim this young person, and holds him self in all respects responsible for her, may she not be at once delivered into his hands?"

"Assuredly," answered the magistrate, with the manner of one glad to be rid of the charge.

"Then, sir, I, Mrs. Warfield, of Hurricane Hall, in Virginia, present myself as the guardian of this girl, Capitola Black, whom I claim as my ward. And I will enter into a recognizance for any sum to appear and prove my right, if it should be disputed. For my personal responsibility, sir, I refer you to the proprietors of the Astor, who have known me many years."

"It is not necessary, Major Warfield: we assume the fact of your responsibility and deliver up the young girl to your charge."

"I thank you, sir," said Old Hurricane, bowing low.

Then hurrying across the room where sat the reporter for the press, he said:

"Gentlemen, I have a favor to ask of you—it is that you will altogether drop this case of the boy in girl's clothes—I mean the girl in girl's clothes—I declare, I don't know what I mean! I don't know it, neither, until I see the creature in its proper sex, but this I wish to request of you, gentlemen, that you will drop that item from your report, or if you must mention it, treat it with delicacy, as the good name of a young lady is involved."

"The reporters, with sidelong glances, winks, and smiles, gave him the required promise, and Old Hurricane returned to the side of his *protegee*.

"Capitola, are you willing to go with me?" "Jolly willing, governor."

"Then come along, my coach is waiting," said Old Hurricane.

Anti, bowing to the Court, he took the hand of his charge, and led her forth amid the ill-suppressed jibes of the crowd.

"There's a hoary-headed old sinner!" said one.

"She's as like him as two peas," quoth another.

"Wonder if there's any more belonging to him of the same sort?" inquired a third.

Leaving all this auction behind him, Old Hurricane handed his *protege* into the coach, took the seat beside her, and gave orders to be driven out towards Harlem.

As soon as they were seated in the coach, the old man turned to his charge and said:

"Capitola, I shall have to trust to your girl's wit, to get yourself into your proper clothes again without exciting further notice."

"Yes, governor."

"My boy, girl, I mean! I am not the governor of Virginia, though if every one had his rights I don't know but I should be! However, I am only Major Warfield," said the old man, naively, for he had not the most distant idea that the title bestowed on him by Capitola, was a mere remnant of her news-boy's "slang."

"Now, my lad—shave! my lass, I mean, now shall we get you metamorphosed again."

"I know gov—major, I mean. There is a shop of ready-made clothing at the Needle Woman's Aid 'corner of the next square. I can get out there and buy a full suit."

"Very well stop at the next corner, driver," called Old Hurricane.

The next minute the coach drew up before a warehouse of ready-made garments.

Old Hurricane jumped out, and leading his charge, entered the shop.

Luckily, there was behind the counter only one person—a staid, elderly, kind-looking woman.

"Here, madam," said Old Hurricane, stooping confidentially to her—"I am in a little embarrassment that I hope you will be willing to help me out of for a consideration. I came to New York in pursuit of my ward—this young girl, whom I found in boy's clothes. I wish to restore her to her proper dress, and I am presenting her to my friends, of course. Therefore, I wish you to furnish her with a half a dozen complete suits of female attire, of the very best you have that will fit her, and also to give her the use of a room and of your own aid in changing her dress. I will pay you liberally."

Half suspicious and half scandalized, the worthy woman gazed with scrutiny first in the face of the guardian, and then into that of the

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ward; but fading in the extreme youth of the one
and the advanced age of the other, and in the
honest expression of both, something to allay
her fears, if not to inspire her confidence, she
said:

"Very well, sir. Come after me, young gen-
tleman—young lady, I should say." And calling
in a boy to mind the shop, she conducted Capitola
to an inner apartment.

Old Hurricane went out and dismissed his
coach. When it was entirely out of sight, he
hailed another that was passing by empty, and
engaged it to take himself and a young lady to
the Washington House.

When he re-entered the shop he found the
shopwoman and Capitola returned and waiting for
him.

Capitola was indeed transfigured. Her bright
black hair parted in the middle, fell in ringlets
each side her blushing cheeks; her dark gray
eyes were cast down in modesty at the very same
instant that her ripe red lips were puckered up
with mischief. She was well and properly attired
in a gray silk dress, with a merino shawl, and
a black velvet bonnet.

The other clothing that had been purchased
was done up in packages and put into the
coach.

And after paying the shopwoman handsomely,
Old Hurricane took the hand of his ward, handed
her into the coach, and gave the order:

"To the Washington House."

The ride was performed in silence.

Capitola sat deeply blushing at the recollection
of her male attire, and profoundly cogitating as
to what could be the relationship between herself
and the gray old man who claimed the recorder
and had so promptly admitted. There seemed to
be one way of accounting for the great interest he
took in her fate. Capitola came to the conclusion
that the grim old lion before her was no more nor
less than—her own father! for, alas, poor Cap.
had been too long tossed about New York not to
know more of life than at her age she would have
known. She had indeed the *innocence* of youth,
but not its *simplicity*.

Old Hurricane, on his part, sat with his thick
cane grasped in his two knobby hands, standing
between his knees, his grizzled chin resting
upon it, and his eyes cast down as in deep
thought.

And so in silence they reached the Washington
House.

Major Warfield then conducted his ward into
the ladies' parlor, and went and entered his own
and her name upon the books as "Major War-
field and his ward Miss Black," for whom he en-
gaged two bedrooms and a private parlor.

Then leaving Capitola to be shown to her
apartment by a chambermaid, he went out and
ordered her luggage up to her room, and dismissed
the coach.

Next he walked to the Astor House, paid his
bill, collected his baggage, took another carriage
and drove back to the Washington Hotel.

All this trouble Old Hurricane took to break
the links of his action and prevent scandal. This
dilemma was a long forenoon.

He dined alone with his ward in his private
parlor.

Such a dinner poor Cap. had never even *smelt*
before! How intensely she enjoyed it with all
its surroundings!—the comfortable room, the
glowing fire, the clean table, the rich food, the
obsequious attendance, her own genteel and be-
coming dress, the company of a highly respect-
able guardian—all, all, so different from anything
she had ever been accustomed to, and so highly
prized!

How happy she felt! how much happier from
to contrast of her previous wretchedness! she
suddenly freed from want, toil, fear, and all
the evils of destitute orphanage, and to find her-
self blessed with wealth, leisure, and safety, under
the care of a rich, good, and kind father! (for
Capitola continued to believe her guardian
father.) It was an incredible thing! It was like
a fairy tale!

Nothing of what was passing in her mind
was received by Old Hurricane, who frequently
brought up various bits of laughter, as he watch-
ed her.

At last, when the dinner and dessert were re-
moved and the nuts, raisins, and wine placed
upon the table, and the waiters had retired from

the room and left them alone, sitting one on each
side of the fire, with the table and its luxuries
between them, Major Warfield suddenly looked up
and asked:

"Capitola, whom do you think that I am?"

"Old Hurricane, to be sure! I know you from
Granny's description, the moment you broke out
so in the police office," answered Cap.

"Humph! yes, you're right; and it was your
granny that bequeathed you to me, Capitola."

"Then she is really dead?"

"Yes. There—don't cry about her. She was
very old, and she died happy. Now, Capitola,
if you please me, I mean to adopt you as my own
daughter."

"Yes, father."

"No, no—you needn't call me father, you know,
because it isn't true. Call me *uncle*! uncle!"

"Is that true, sir?" asked Cap., demurely.

"No, no, no; but it will *do*! it will *do*! Now,
Cap., how much do you know? anything? Ig-
norant as a horse, I am afraid."

"Yes, sir, even as a *colt*."

"Can you read at all?"

"Yes, sir, I learned at the Sunday School."

"Can't accounts and write?"

"I can keep your books at a pinch, sir."

"Humph! who taught you these accomplish-
ments?"

"Herbert Greyson, sir."

"Herbert Greyson! I heard that name be-
fore here it is again. What is Herbert Grey-
son?"

"He's second mate on the *Susan*, sir, that is
expected in every day."

"Umph! I don't like a glass of wine, Cap-
itola!"

"No, sir, I never touch a single drop."

"Why? why? good wine after dinner, my
child, is a good thing, let me tell you."

"Ah, sir, my life has shown me too much
misery that has come of drinking wine."

"Well, well, as you please. Why, where has
the girl run off to?" exclaimed the old man,
breaking off, and looking with amazement at
Capitola, who had suddenly started up and rushed
out of the room.

In an instant she rushed in again, exclaiming:

"Oh, he's come! he's come! I heard his
voice!"

"Who's come, you madcap?" inquired the old
man.

"Oh, Herbert Greyson! Herbert Greyson!

His ship is in, and he has come here! he *always*
comes here—most of the sea-officers do!" ex-
claimed Cap., dancing around until all her black
ringlets flew up and down. Then suddenly
pausing, she came quietly to his side, and said,
solemnly:

"He knows nothing of my past misery and desti-
tution, nor of my ever-rearing boy's clothes.
Uncle, please don't tell him, especially of the
boy's clothes!" And in the earnestness of her
appeal, Capitola clasped her hands and raised
her eyes to the old man's face. How soft those
gray eyes looked when praying! but for all that,
the very air of mischief still lurked about the
corners of the plump, arch lips.

"Of course I shall tell no one. I am not so
proud of your masquerading as to publish it.
And as for this young fellow, I shall probably
never see him!" exclaimed Old Hurricane.

CHAPTER VIII.

HERBERT GREYSON.

A kid, true heart, a spirit high,
That cannot fear and will not bow,
Is healing in his manly eye
And stamped upon his brow.—HALLECK.

In a few minutes Capitola came bounding up
the stairs again, exclaiming, joyously—

"Here he is, uncle! here is Herbert Greyson!
Come along, Herbert! You must come in and see
my new uncle!" And she broke into the room,
dragging before her astonished guardian a hand-
some, dark-eyed young sailor, who bowed, and
then stood blushing at his enforced intrusion.

"I beg your pardon, sir," he said, "for burst-
ing in upon you in this way; but—"

"I dragged him here willy-nilly," said Capitola.
"Still, if I had had time to think, I should not
have intruded."

"Oh, say no more, sir! You are heartily wel-
come!" exclaimed the old man, thrusting out his
rugged hand and seizing the bronzed one of the
youth. "Sit down, sir! sit down! *Good Lord,*
how like!" he said to the young sailor still stand-
ing blushing and hesitating, he struck his cane upon
the floor and reared out:

"Denny, sit down, sir! When Ira Warfield
says sit down, he means sit down!"

"Ira Warfield!" exclaimed the young man,
starting back in astonishment—one might almost
say in consternation.

"Aye, sir! Ira Warfield! that's my name!"

"Never heard any ill of it, did you?"

The young man did not answer, but continued
gazing in amazement upon the speaker.

"Nor any good of it either, perhaps,—eh, un-
cle?" archly put in Capitola.

"Silence, you monkey! Well, young man!

well, what is the meaning of all this?" exclaimed
Old Hurricane, impatiently.

"Oh, your pardon, sir! this was sudden. But
you must know I had once a relative of that name
—an uncle."

"And have still, Herbert! and have still lad!

Come, come, boy! I am not sentimental nor ro-
mantic, nor melo-dramatic, nor anything of that
sort. I don't know how to strike an attitude and
exclaim—'Come to my bosom, sole remaining off-
spring of a dear, departed sister,' or any of the
like stage-playing. But I tell you, lad, that I like
your looks; and I like what I have heard of you
from this girl and another old woman, now dead;
and so—but sit down, *sit down!* Denny, sir! sit
down, and we'll talk over the walnut and the
wine! Capitola, take your seat, too!" ordered
the old man, throwing himself into his chair.
Herbert also drew his chair up.

Capitola resumed her seat, saying to herself,

"Well, well, I am determined not to be sur-
prised at anything that happens, being perfectly
clear in my own mind that this is all nothing but
a dream. But how pleasant it is to dream the! I
have found a rich uncle and he has found a
nephew, and that nephew is Herbert Greyson! I
do believe that I had rather die in my sleep than
wake from this dream."

"Herbert!" said Old Hurricane, as soon as they
had gathered around the table, "Herbert, this is
my ward, Miss Black, the daughter of a deceased
friend. Capitola, this is the only son of my de-
parted sister."

"How-um! we have had the pleasure of being
acquainted with each other before!" said Cap.,
pinching up her lip, and looking demure. "But
not of knowing who 'each other' was, you monkey!
Herbert, fill your glass! Here's to our better ac-
quaintance!"

"I thank you, sir, I never touch wine," said
the young man.

"Never touch wine! here's *another!* here's
a young prig! I don't believe you're, yes, I do too!
Denny, sir,—if you never touch wine it's because
you prefer *brandy!*—Waiter!"

"I thank you, sir. Order no brandy for me.
If I never use intoxicating liquors, it is because
I gave a promise to that effect to my dying
mother."

"Say no more—say no more, lad! Drink
water, if you like. *It won't hurt you!*" exclaimed
the old man, filling and quaffing a glass of cham-
pagne. Then he said:

"I quarrelled with your mother, Herbert, for
marrying a man that I *hated*—yes, *hated*, Herbert!
for he differed with me about the tariff and the
Trinity! Oh, how I hated him, boy, until he
died! and then I wondered in my soul as I wonder
even now, how I ever could have been so infuriated
against a poor fellow now cold in his grave—as I
shall be in time! I wrote to my sister, and ex-
pressed my feelings; but some how or other, Herbert,
we never came to a right understanding again.
She answered my letter affectionately enough, but
she refused to accept a home for herself and
child under my roof, saying that she thanked me
for my offer, but that the house which had been
closed against her husband ought never to become
the refuge of the widow. After that we never
corresponded, and I have no doubt, Herbert,
that she, naturally enough, taught you to dislike
me."

"Not so, sir! Indeed, you wrong her! She might have been loyal to my father's memory that you had a noble nature, but it was often obscured by violent passions, but it was often she bade me, should I ever meet you, to say kindness."

"And consented that it should be transferred to her orphan boy!" added Old Hurricane, with the tears like rain-drops in his stormy eyes.

"Not sir, she said not so."

"But yet she would not have disapproved a service offered to her son."

"Uncle—since you permit me to call you so—

—I want nothing. I have a good berth in the *Sharon* and a kind friend in her captain."

"You have all your dear mother's pride, Herbert."

"And all his uncle's," put in Cap.

"Hush, magpie! But is the merchant service agreeable to you, Herbert?"

"Not perfectly, sir; but one must be content."

"Demmy, sir, my sister's son need not be content unless he has a mind to! And if you prefer the navy."

"No, sir. I like the navy even less than the merchant service."

"Then what would suit you, lad. Come, you have betrayed the fact that you are not altogether satisfied."

"On the contrary, sir, I told you distinctly that I really wanted nothing, and that I must be satisfied."

"And I say demmy, sir, you *shan't* be satisfied, unless you like to! Come, if you don't like the navy, what do you say to the army, eh?"

"It is a proud, aspiring profession, sir," said the young man, as his face lighted up with content.

"Then, demmy, if you like the army, sir, you shall enter it. Yes, sir. Demmy, the administration, confound them, has not done me justice, but they'll scarcely dare to refuse to send my nephew to West Point, when I demand it."

"Ayo, youngster, to West Point. I shall see to it, when I pass through Washington on my way to Virginia. We start in the early train tomorrow morning. In the meantime, young man, you take leave of your captain, pack up your traps, and join us. You must go with me, and make Hurricane Hall your home until you go to West Point."

"Oh what a capital old governor our uncle is!" exclaimed Cap., jumping up and clapping her hands.

"Sir, indeed you overwhelm me with this most unexpected kindness. I do not know as yet how much of it I ought to accept. But accident will make me, whether or no, your travelling companion for a great part of the way, as I also start for Virginia to-morrow, to visit dear friends there, whose house was always mother's and mine, and a dear mother and brother. I have not seen them for years, and before I go anywhere else, even to your kind roof, I must go *there*," said Herbert, gravely.

"And who are those dear friends of yours, Herbert, and where do they live? If I can serve unto you, my boy."

"Oh, sir, yes, yes! you can indeed serve them! They are a poor widow and her only son living to support herself and boy. When my mother was living, during the last years of her life, they joined their slender means, and took a house and lived together. When my mother died, leaving me a boy of ten years old, this poor woman still sheltered and worked for me as for her own son, until ashamed of being a burden to her, I ran away and went to sea."

"Noble woman! I will make her fortune!" exclaimed Old Hurricane, jumping up and walking up and down the floor.

"Oh, do, sir! Oh, do! dear uncle. I don't wish you to expend either money or influence upon my fortunes; but oh! do educate Traversa! the such a gifted lad—no indolent! even his Sunday school teacher says that he is sure to be altogether dependent on his Sunday school for his

learning. Oh, sir, if you would only educate the son *Ac'd* make a fortune for his mother!"

"Generous boy, to plead for your friends rather than for yourself! But I am strong enough, thank God, to help you all! You shall go to West Point. Your young friend shall go to school, and then to college," said Old Hurricane, with a burst of honest enthusiasm.

"And where shall I go, sir?" inquired Cap.

"To the lunatic asylum, you imp!" exclaimed the old man; then turning to Herbert, he continued: "Yes, lad, I will do as I say; as for the poor but noble-hearted widow—"

"You'll marry her yourself, as a reward, won't you, uncle?" asked the incorrigible Cap.

"Perhaps I will, you monkey, if it is only to bring somebody home to keep you in order!" said Old Hurricane; then turning again to Herbert, he resumed: "As to the widow, Herbert, I will place her above want."

"Over my head," cried Cap.

"And now, Herbert, I will trouble you to ring for coffee, and after we have had that, I think we had better separate, and prepare for our journey to-morrow."

Herbert obeyed, and after the required refreshment had been served and partaken of, the little circle broke up for the evening, and soon after retired to rest.

Early the next morning, after a hasty breakfast, the three took their seats in the express train for Washington, where they arrived upon the evening of the same day. They put up for the night at Brown's; and the next day, called upon the President, the Secretary of War, and other high official dignitaries, and put affairs in such a train that he had little doubt of the appointment of his nephew to a cadetship at West Point.

The same evening, wishing to avoid the stage route over the mountains, he took with his party the night boat for Richmond, where in due time of coaches that passed through Tip-top, they reached upon the morning of the fourth day of their long journey. Here they found Major Warfield's carriage waiting for him, and here they were to separate—Major Warfield and Captain Greysen to keep on the route to the town of Staunton.

It was at the three sat in the parlor of the little hotel, where the stage stopped to change horses, their adieus were made.

"Remember, Herbert, that I am willing to go to the utmost extent of my power to benefit the nephew in his need. Remember that I hold it my sacred debt that I owe them. Tell them so, and at farthest."

"I shall be punctual, sir! God bless you, my dear uncle! you have made me very happy in being the bearer of such glad tidings to the widow and fatherless. And now I hear the horn blowing—Good-bye, uncle! Good-bye, Capitola, joy, uncle, as you who have everything you want, heartily with his companions, Herbert ran through the door, and jumped aboard the coach just as the impatient driver was about to leave him behind.

As soon as the coach had rolled out of sight Major Warfield handed Capitola into the carriage who had long been waiting, and took the seat by her side—much to the scandalization of Wool.

"There, I told you so! I said how he'd go, and bring home a young wife, and behold he's gone and done it!"

"Uncle!" said Capitola, as the carriage rolled lazily along—"Uncle! you know you never once asked Herbert the name of the widow you are going to befriend, and that he never told you."

"By George! that is true! how strange! yet I did not seem to *miss* the name. How did it pass, then, Capitola? did he omit it on purpose?"

"Why, no, uncle! *Ac*, boy-like, always spoke of them as 'Traversa' and 'Traversa's mother'—and you, like yourself, called her nothing but the 'poor widow,' and the 'struggling mother';

and the 'noble woman,' and so on; and her son, as the 'boy,' the 'youth,' the 'young Traversa,' Herbert's friend, etc. I, for my part, had some curiosity to see whether you and Herbert would go on talking of them forever, without having off without naming them!"

"By George! and so he did. It was the strangest oversight. But I'll write as soon as I get home and ask him."

"Wait until he comes back and see how long it will be and how much he will talk of them without mentioning their names!"

"Ha! ha! ha! so I will, Cap. so I will, Be-zee, a rose by any other name would smell as sweet, I shall still think so good a woman called as a Mountmorcene!—Mind there, Wool!"

This road is getting rough!"

"Over it now, Marster!" said Wool after a few heavy jolts—"Over it now, Missus! and do rest of do give me perfectly delighted!"

Cap. looked out of the window, and saw before her a beautiful piece of scenery—first, just beyond the town, the wild mountain stream of the Demon's Run, and beyond it the wild dell centred into the side of the mountain, like the deep of which gleaming redly among its richly tinted autumn woods, stood Hurricane Hall.

CHAPTER IX.

MARAH ROCKE.

"There sits upon her matron face
A tender and a thoughtful grace,
Thought very still—for great distress
Hath left this patient mountaintop."

Beside an old, rocky road, leading from the town of Staunton, out to the forest-crowned hills beyond, stood alone, a little, gray stone cottage, mouldering stone wall, a lone cypress twisted fruit tree long past bearing, stood around the house, that their leafless branches could not be said to shade. A little wooden gate, each side of which were large windows.

In this poor cottage, remote from other neighbors, dwelt the friends of Herbert Greysen, the widow Rocks and her son Traversa.

No one knew who she was, or whence, or why she came. Some fifteen years before she had appeared in the town, clothed in rusty mourning and accompanied by a boy of about twenty years of age. She had rented that cottage, furnished it poorly, and had settled there, supporting herself and child by needle-work.

At the time that Doctor Greysen died and his widow and son were left perfectly destitute, and it became necessary for Mrs. Greysen to look out for an humble lodging where she could find the united advantages of cheapness, cleanliness, and pure air, she was providentially led to inquire at the cottage of the widow Rocks, whom she found only too glad to increase her meagre income by letting half her little house to such respectable tenants as the widow Greysen and her son.

And thus commenced between the two poor young women a friendship, and this friendship that devoted love so seldom seen in these inferior households became intimate. One fire and one candle and one table served the little family as much social comfort was saved as would have grown too old to gain. And when one bed held the two boys and the other accommodated the two women. And despite all, with the sorrow for the dead and the regret for the living, this was a bright, contented and cheerful little household. How much of their private history these women might have related to each other, was not known, but it is certain that they continued fast friends up to the time of the death of Mrs. Greysen. At which time the widow Rocks resumed a double birth, and became a second mother to the orphan boy, until Herbert himself, ashamed of his her

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"But I'm getting on quite well with my education for all that," interrupted Travers; "for I belong to Dr. Day's Bible class in the Sabbath school, which is a class of young men, you know! and the doctor is so good as to think that I have some mental gifts worth cultivating, so he does not confine his instructions to me to the Bible class alone, but permits me to come to him in his library, at Willow-Highgate, for an hour, twice a week, when he examines me in Latin and Algebra, and sets me new exercises, which I study and write out at night; so that you see I am doing very well."

"Indeed, the doctor, who is a great scholar, and one of the trustees and examiners of the Seminary, says that he does not know any young man *there*, with all the advantages of the institution around him, who is getting along so fast as Travers is, with all the difficulties he has to encounter. The doctor says it is all because Travers is profoundly in earnest, and that one of these days he will be—"

"There, mother! don't repeat all the doctor's kind speeches! He only says such things to encourage a poor boy in the pursuit of knowledge under difficulties," said Travers, blushing and laughing.

"Will be an honor to his kindred, country and race," said Horbert, finishing the widow's incomplete quotation.

"It was something like that, indeed," she said, nodding and smiling.

"You do me proud," said Travers, touching his forehead with comic gravity. "But," he acquired he, suddenly changing his tone and becoming serious, "was it not—it is not—noble in the doctor to give up an hour of his precious time twice a week, for no other cause than to help a poor, struggling fellow like me up the ladder of learning?"

"I should think it was; but he is not the first noble heart I ever heard of," said Horbert, with an affectionate glance that directed the compliment, "nor is he the last that you will meet with. I *must* tell you the good news now."

"Oh, tell it! tell it! I have you got a ship of your own, Herbert?"

"No, nor is it about myself that I am anxious to tell you. Mrs. Cooke, you may have heard that I had a rich uncle, whom I had never seen, because, from the time of my dear mother's marriage to that of her death, she and her brother, these very uncles, had been estranged."

"Yes," said the widow, speaking in a very low tone, and bending her head over her work; "yes, I have heard so; but your mother and myself seldom alluded to the subject."

"Exactly! mother never was fond of talking of him! Well, when I came on shore, and went, as usual, up to the old Washington House, who should I meet with all of a sudden, but this rich uncle. He had come to New York to claim a little girl whom I happened to know, and who happened to recognize me, and name me to him. Well, I knew him *only* by his name; and he knew me both by name and by my likeness to his sister, and received me with wonderful kindness, offered me a home under his roof, and promised to get for me an appointment to West Point. Are you not glad?—ay, are you not glad?" he exclaimed joyously clapping his hand upon Travers's knee, and then turning around and looking at his mother.

"Oh, yes, indeed I am very glad, Herbert!" exclaimed Travers, heartily grasping and squeezing his friend's hand.

"Yes, yes, I am indeed sincerely glad of your good fortune, dear boy," said the widow; but her voice was very faint, and her head bent still lower over her work.

"Ha! ha! ha! I *knew* you'd be glad for me; but now I require you to be glad for *yourself*. Now listen: When I told my honest old uncle—for he is honest, with all his condescension—when I told him of what friends you had been to me—"

"Oh, not you did not! You did not mention us to him!" cried the widow, suddenly starting up and clasping her hands together, while she gazed in an agony of entreaty into the face of the speaker.

"Why not?—why in the world not? Was there anything improper in so doing?" inquired Horbert in astonishment, while Travers himself gazed in amazement at the excessive and unaccountable agitation of his mother.

"Why, mother? Why shouldn't he have mentioned us? Was there anything strange or wrong in that?" inquired Travers.

"No, oh, no; certainly not!—I forgot, it was so sudden," said the widow, sinking back in her chair and struggling for self-control.

"Why, mother, what in the world is the meaning of this?" asked her son.

"Nothing, nothing, boy; only we are poor folks, and should not be forced upon the attention of a wealthy gentleman," she said, with a cold, unnatural smile, putting her hand to her brow and striving to gain composure. Then, as Herbert continued silent and amazed she said to him:

"Go on—go on—you were saying something about my—about Major Warfield's kindness to you—go on," and she took up her work and tried to sew, but she was as pale as death, and trembling all over at the same time, that every nerve was acute with attention, to catch every word that might fall from the lips of Herbert.

"Well," recommenced the young sailor, "I was just saying that when I mentioned you and Travers to my uncle, and told him how kind and disinterested you had been to me—you being like a mother, and Travers like a brother, he was really moved almost to tears!—Yes, I declare I saw the rain-drops glittering in his tempestuous old orbs, as he walked the floor muttering to himself, 'Poor woman—good, excellent woman.'"

While Herbert spoke, the widow dropped her work without seeming to know that she had done so; her fingers were locked so nervously that she had to hold both hands clasped together, and her eyes were fixed in intense anxiety upon the face of the youth, as she repeated:

"Go on—oh, go on! What more did he say when you talked of us?"

"He said everything that was kind and good. He said that he could not do too much to compensate you for the past."

"Oh! did he say that?" exclaimed the widow, breathlessly.

"Yes—and a great deal more!—that all that he could do for you or your son was but a sacred debt he owed you."

"Oh, he acknowledged it! he acknowledged it! I thank heaven! oh, thank heaven! Go on, Herbert! Go on!"

"He said that he would in future take the whole charge of the boy's advancement in life, and that he would place you above want forever; that he would, in fact, compensate for the past by doing you and yours full justice."

"Thank heaven! Oh, thank heaven!" exclaimed the widow, no longer concealing her agitation, but throwing down her work, and starting up and pacing the floor in excess of joy.

"Mother," said Travers, unheeding, going to her and taking her hand, "mother, what is the meaning of all this? Do come and sit down!"

She immediately turned and walked back to the fire, and resting her hands upon the back of the chair, bent upon them a face radiant with youthful beauty. Her cheeks were brightly flushed, her eyes were sparkling with light, her whole countenance resplendent with joy—she scarcely seemed twenty years of age.

"Mother tell us what it is," pleaded Travers, who feared for her sanity.

"Oh, boys, I am so happy! at last! at last! after eighteen years of patient 'crying against hope!' I shall go mad with joy!"

"Mother," said Herbert softly, "Children, I am not crazy! I know what I am saying, though I did not intend to say it! And you shall know too! But first I must ask Herbert another question: 'Herbert, are you very sure that he—Major Warfield, knew who we were?'"

"Yes, indeed. Didn't I tell him all about you? Your troubles, your struggles, your disinterestedness, and all your history since ever I knew you," answered Herbert, who was truly unconscious that he had left Major Warfield in ignorance of one very important fact—her surname.

"Then you are sure he knew who *he* was talking about?"

"Of course, he did!"

"He could not have failed to do so, indeed! But, Herbert, did he mention any other important fact, that you have not yet communicated to us?"

"No, ma'am."

"Did he allude to any previous acquaintance with us?"

"No, ma'am unless it might have been in the world I repeated to you—there was nothing else!—except that he bade me hurry to you and make you glad with his message, and return as soon as possible to let him know whether you accept his offers."

"Accept them! accept them! of course I do! I have waited for them for years!—oh! children! you gaze on me as if you thought me mad! I am not so! nor can I now explain myself for since he has not chosen to be confidential with Herbert, I can not do so prematurely! but you will know all, when Herbert shall have borne back my message to Major Warfield."

It was, indeed, a mad evening in the cottage. And even when the little family had separated and retired to bed the two youths lying together as formerly, could not sleep for talking; while the widow, on her lonely couch, lay awake for joy.

CHAPTER X.

THE BOOM OF THE TRAP-DOOR.

If you have hitherto concealed this slight, let it be temble, in your silence still! And whilst we are thus both hazy to a right, Give us an understanding, but no fence.

SHAKESPEARE.

Capitola meanwhile in the care of the Major, arrived at Hurricane Hall, much to the discomfiture of good Mrs. Conditment, who was quite unprepared to expect the now inmate; and when Major Warfield said:

"Mrs. Conditment, this is your young lady, take her off to the best bedroom, where she can take off her bonnet and shawl," the worthy dame, thinking secretly: "The old fool as gone and married a young wife, sure enough; a mere child of a child," made a very deep curtsy, and a very queer cough, and said:

"I'm mortified, ma'am, at the fire not being made in the best bedroom; but when I was warned of your coming, Madam!"

"Madam! Is the old woman crazed? This child is no 'madam!' She is Miss Black, my ward, the daughter of a deceased friend;" sharply exclaimed Old Hurricane.

"Excuse me, Miss, I did not know; I was unprepared to receive a young lady. Shall I attend you, Miss Black?" said the old lady in a mollified tone.

"If you please," said Capitola, and arose to follow her.

"Not expecting you, Miss, I have no proper room prepared—most of them are not furnished, and in some the chimneys are foul; indeed, the only tolerable room I can put you in is the room with the trap-door—if you would not object to it?" said Mrs. Conditment, as with a candle in her hand, she preceded Capitola along the gloomy hall, and then opened a door that led into a narrow passage.

"A room with a trap-door?—that's a curious thing; but why should I object to it! I don't at all. I think I should rather like it," said Capitola.

"I will show it to you and tell you about it, and then if it is, well and good! If not, I shall have to put you in a room that leaks, and has swallow nests in the chimney," answered Mrs. Conditment, as she led the way along the narrow passages, and up and down dark, back stairs, and through bare and deserted rooms, and along other passages until she reached a remote chamber, opened the door, and invited her guest to enter.

It was a large, shadowy room, through which the single candle shed such a faint, uncertain light, that at first Capitola could see nothing but black masses looming through the darkness.

But when Mrs. Conditment advanced and set the candle upon the chimney-piece, and Capitola's sight accommodated itself to the scene, she saw that upon the right of the chimney-piece stood a tall tester bedstead, curtained with very dark crimson serge; on the left hand, thick curtains of the same color draped the windows. Between these windows, directly opposite the bed, stood a dark mahogany dressing bureau, with a large looking-glass; a wash-stand in the left hand corner of the chimney-place; and a rocking-chair

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TRAP-DOOR.

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and two plain chairs completed the furniture of
this room, that I am so particular in describing,
as upon the simple accident of its arrangement
depended upon two occasions the life and honor
of its occupant. There was no carpet on the
floor, with the exception of a large old Turkey rug
that was laid before the fire-place.

"Here, my dear, this room is perfectly dry and
comfortable, and we always keep kindlings built
up in the fireplace ready to light in case a guest
should come," said Mrs. Condiment, applying a
match to the wastepaper under the pine-knots and
logs that filled the chimney. Soon there arose a
cheerful blaze that lighted up all the room, glow-
ing on the crimson serge bed-curtains and win-
dow-curtains, and flashing upon the large look-
ing-glass between them.

"There, my dear; sit down, and make your-
self comfortable," said Mrs. Condiment, drawing
up the rocking-chair.

Capitola threw herself into it, and looked
around and around the room, and then into the
face of the old lady, saying:

"But what about the trap-door?—I see no trap-
door!"

"Ah, yes—look!" said Mrs. Condiment, lift-
ing up the rug and revealing a large *trap* some
four feet square, that was kept up in its place
by a short iron bolt. "Now, my dear, take care
of yourself, for this bolt slides very easily, and
if, while you happened to be walking across it,
it would, you were to push the bolt back, the trap-
door would drop and you fall down—heaven knows
where!"

"Is there a cellar under there?" inquired Cap-
itola, gazing with interest upon the door.

"Lord knows, child; I don't! I did once make
one of the nigger men let it down, so I could
look in it; but, Lord, child, I saw nothing but a
great, black, deep vacancy, without bottom or
sides! It put such a horror over me that I
have never looked down there since, and never
want to, I'm sure."

"Ugh! for goodness sake what was the horrid
thing made for?" ejaculated Capitola, gazing as
if fascinated by the trap.

"The Lord only knows, my dear; for it was
made long before ever the house came into the
major's family. *But they do say—*" whispered
Mrs. Condiment, mysteriously.

"Ah! what do they say?" asked Capitola,
eagerly throwing off her bonnet and shawl, and
settling herself to hear some thrilling explana-
tion.

Mrs. Condiment slowly replaced the rug, drew
another chair to the side of the young girl, and
said:

"They do say it was—a trap for Indians."

"A trap for Indians?"

"Yes, my dear. You must know that this
room belongs to the *oldest part of the house*. It
was all built as far back as the old French and
Indian war; but this room belonged to the part
that dates back to the first settlement of the
country."

"Then I shall like it better than any room in
the house, for I love to see old places with stories to
tell. Go on, please."

"Yes, my dear. Well, first of all, this place
was a part of the grant of land given to the *Le
Noir*. And the first owner, old Henri Le Noir,
was said to be one of the grandest villains that
ever was heard of. Well, you see, he lived out
here in his hunting-lodge, which is this part of
the house."

"Oh, my! then this very room was a part of
the old pioneer hunter's lodge?"

"Yes, my dear, and they do say that he had
this place made as a trap for the Indians. You
see, they say he was on terms of friendship with
the Sacoopas, a little tribe of Indians that was
nearly wasted away, though among the few that
was left there were several braves! Well, he
wanted to buy a certain large tract of land from
this tribe, and they were all willing to sell it,
except these half a dozen warriors, who wanted
it for camping-ground. So what does this awful
villain do, but lay a snare for them. He makes
a great feast in his lodge and invites his red
brothers to come to it; and they come. Then he
proposes that they stand upon his blanket
and all swear eternal brotherhood, which he
made the poor sons believe was the right way
to do it. Then when they all sit stood close to-
gether as they could stand, with hands held up

something above their heads, all of a sudden the
black villain sprung the bolt, the trap fell, and
the six men went down—down, the Lord knows
where."

"Oh, that is horrible! horrible!" cried Cap-
itola, "but where do you think they fell to?"
"I tell you the Lord only knows. They say
that it is a bottomless abyss, with no outlet but
one crooked one miles long that reaches to the
Demon's Punch Bowl. But if there is a bottom
to that abyss, that bottom is strewn with human
bones."

"Oh, horrible! most horrible!" exclaimed

Capitola.

"Per-son you are afraid to sleep here by your-
self; if so, there's the damp room—"

"Oh, no! oh, no! I am not afraid. I have
been in too much deadly peril from the *living*
ever to fear the *dead*. No, I like the room, with
its strange legend; but tell me, did that human
devil escape without punishment from the tribe
of the murdered victims?"

"Lord, child, how were they to know of what
was done?" There wasn't a man left to tell the
tale. Besides, the tribe was now brought down
to a few old men, women, and children. So, when
he showed a bill of sale for the land he wanted,
signed by the six braves—their marks in six
blood-red arrows, there was none to contradict
him."

"How was his villainy found out?"

"Well, it was said he married, had a family,
and prospered for a long while; but that the
poor Sacoopas always suspected him, and bore
a long grudge, and that when the sons of the
murdered warriors grew up to be powerful
braves, one night they set upon the house and
massacred the whole family except the eldest
son, a lad of ten, who escaped, and ran away
and gave the alarm to the block-house, where
there were soldiers stationed. It is said that
after killing and scalping father, mother, and
children, the savages threw the dead bodies down
that trap-door. And they had just set fire to the
house, and were dancing their wild dance around
it, when the soldiers arrived and dispersed the
party, and put out the fire."

"Oh, what bloody, bloody days!"

"Yes, my dear, and as I told you before, if that
horrible pit has any bottom, that bottom is strewn
with human skeletons!"

"It is an awful thought—"

"As I said, my dear, if you feel at all afraid, you
can have another room."

"Afraid—what of? Those skeletons, suppos-
ing them to be there, cannot hurt me. I am not
afraid of the dead—I only dread the living, and
not them much either," said Capitola.

"Well, my dear, you will want a waiting-woman,
anyhow, and I think I will send Pitapat to
wait on you; she can sleep on a pallet in your
room, and be some company."

"And who is Pitapat, Mrs. Condiment?"

"Pitapat? Lord, child, she is the youngest
of the housemaids. I've called her Pitapat ever
since she was a little one beginning to walk,
when she used to steal away from her mother,
Dorcas, the cook, and I would hear her little feet
coming pitapat, pitapat up the dark stairs up to
my room. As it was often the only sound to be
heard in the still house, I grew to call my little
visitor P'apat."

"Then let me have Pitapat by all means. I
like company, especially company that I can send
away when I choose."

"Very well, my dear, and now I think you'd
better smooth your hair and come down with me
to tea, for it is full time, and the major, as you
may know, is not the most patient of men."

Capitola took a brush from her travelling-bag,
hastily arranged her black ringlets, and announced
herself ready.

They left the room, and traversed the same
labyrinth of passages, stairs, empty rooms and
halls, back to the dining-room, where a comfort-
able fire burned and a substantial supper was
spread.

Old Hurricane took Capitola's hand with a
hearty grasp, and placed her in a chair at the
side, and then took his own seat at the foot of
the table.

Mrs. Condiment sat at the head and poured out
the tea.

"Uncle," said Capitola, suddenly, "what is
under the trap-door in my room?"

"What! have they put you in *that* room?"

exclaimed the old man, hastily looking up.

"There was no other one prepared, sir," said
the house-keeper.

"Besides, I like it very well, uncle," said Cap-
itola.

"Humph! humph! humph!" grunted the old
man, only half satisfied.

"But uncle, what is under the trap-door?"

persisted Capitola, "what's under it?"

"Oh, I don't know—an old cave that was once
used as a dry cellar, until an underground stream
broke through and made it too damp—so it is
said. I never explored it."

"But, uncle, what about the—"

Here Mrs. Condiment stretched out her foot
and trod upon the toes of Capitola so sharply a-
s to make her stop short, while she dexterously
changed the conversation by asking the major if
he would not send Wool to Tip-Top in the morn-
ing for another bag of coffee.

Soon after supper was over, Capitola, saying
that she was tired, bade her uncle good-night,
and, attended by her little black maid Pitapat,
whom Mrs. Condiment had called up for the pur-
pose, retired to her distant chamber. There were
already collected her three trunks, which the lib-
erality of her uncle had filled.

As soon as she had got in and locked the door,
she detached one of the strongest straps from
her largest trunk, and then turned up the rug,
and secured the end of the strap to the ring in
the trap-door. Then she withdrew the bolt, and
holding on to one end of the strap, gently lower-
ed the trap, and, kneeling, gazed down into an
awful black void—without boundaries, without
light, without sounds, except a deep, faint, subter-
ranean roaring as of water.

"Bring the light, Pitapat, and hold it over this
place, and take care you don't fall in!" said Cap-
itola. "Come, as I've got a 'pit' in my name and
you've got a 'pit' in yours, we'll see if we two
can't make something of this third 'pit'!"

"Deed I've 'fraid, Miss," said the poor little
darkey.

"Afraid! what of?"

"Ghoses."

"Nonsense. I'll agree to lay every ghost you
see!"

The little maid approached, candle in hand,
but in such a gingerly sort of way, that Cap-
itola seized the light from her hand, and stoop-
ing, held it down as far as she could reach, and
gazed once more into the abyss. But this only
made the horrible darkness "visible"; no object
caught or reflected a single ray of light—all was
black, hollow, void and silent, except the faint,
deep, distant roaring as of subterranean water!

Capitola pushed the light down as far as she
could possibly reach, and then yielding to a
strange fascination, dropt it into the abyss!

It went down, down, down, down into the dark-
ness, until far below it glimmered out of sight!

Then with an awful shudder Capitola pulled up
and fastened the trap-door, laid down the rug
and said her prayers and went to bed by the fire-
light,—with little Pitapat sleeping on a pallet.

The last thought of Cap., before falling to sleep,
was:

"It is awful to go to bed over such a horrible
mystery; but I will be a hero!"

CHAPTER XI.

A MYSTERY AND A STORM AT HURRICANE HALL.

Bid her address her prayers to heaven!
Loan if she there may be forgiven;
Its mercy may be shown to her yet!
But here upon this earth beneath
There is no spot where she and I
Together for an hour could breathe!—Byron.

Early the next morning Capitola arose, made
her toilet, and went out to explore the outer
walls of her part of the old house, to discover if
possible, some external entrance into the unknown
cavity under her room. It was a bright, cheerful
healthy autumnal morning, well adapted to dis-
pel all clouds of mystery and superstition. Heaps
of crimson and golden hued leaves, glimmering
with hoar frost, lay drifted against the old walls,
and when these were brushed away by the busy
feet and hands of the young girl, they revealed
nothing but the old mouldering foundation; as

a vestige of a cellar-door or window was visible.

Capitola abandoned the fruitless search, and turned to go into the house. And saying to herself:

"I'll think no more of it! I dare say, after all, it is nothing but a very dark cellar without window and with a well, and the story of the murders and of the skeletons, is all moonshine!" She ran into the dining-room, and took her seat at the breakfast table.

Old Hurricane was just then storming away at his factotum Wool for some misdemeanor, the nature of which Capitola did not bear, for upon her appearance, he suffered his wrath to subside in a few reverberating low thunders, gave his ward a grumpy "good-morning," and sat down to his breakfast.

After breakfast Old Hurricane took his great-coat and cocked hat, and stormed forth upon the plantation to blow up his lazy overseer, Mr. Will Ezy, and his idle negroes, who had loitered or frolicked away all the days of their master's absence.

Mrs. Condiment went away to mix a plum-pudding for dinner, and Cap. was left alone.

After wandering through the lower rooms of the house, the stately old-fashioned drawing-room, the family-parlor, the dining-room, etc., Cap. found her way through all the narrow back passages and steep little stair-cases back to her own chamber.

The chamber looked quite different by daylight—the cheerful wood fire burning in the chimney right before her, opposite the door by which she entered; the crimson curtains bled on her right hand; the crimson draped windows, with the rich old mahogany bureau and dressing-glass between them, on her left; the polished, dark oak floor; the rich Turkey rug, concealing the trap-door; the comfortable rocking-chair; the new workstand, placed there for her use that morning, and her own well filled trunk standing in the corners, looked altogether too cheerful to associate with dark thoughts.

Besides, Capitola had not the least particle of gloom, superstition or marvellousness in her disposition. She loved old houses and old legends well enough to enjoy them; but was not sufficiently credulous to believe, or cowardly to fear them.

She had besides, a pleasant morning's occupation before her, in unpacking her three trunks and arranging her wardrobe and her possessions, which were all upon the most liberal scale, for Major Warfield at every city where he had stopped had given his poor little *protégée* a virtual *carte blanche* for purchases, having said to her:

"Capitola, I'm an old bachelor; I've not the least idea what a young girl requires; all I know is, that you have nothing but your clothes, and must want sewing and knitting needles, and brushes and scissors and combs, and boxes and smelling-bottles and tooth-powder; and such. So come along with me to one of those Vanity Fair's they call fancy stores, and get what you want; I'll foot the bill."

And Capitola, who firmly believed that she had the most sacred of claims upon Major Warfield, whose resources she also supposed to be unlimited, did not fail to indulge her taste for rich and costly toys, and supplied herself with a large ivory dressing-case, lined with velvet, and furnished with ivory-handled combs and brushes, silver boxes and crystal bottles; a papier mache work-box, with gold thimble, needle-case and perforator and gold-mounted scissors and winders; and an ebony writing-desk with silver-mounted crystal standlamps; each of these—boxes and desk—were filled with all things requisite in the several departments. And now as Capitola unpacked them and arranged them upon the top of the bureau, it was with no small degree of appreciation. The rest of the forenoon was spent in arranging the best articles of her wardrobe in her bureau drawers.

Having looked the remainder in her trunks, and carefully smoothed her hair, and dressed herself in a brown merino, she went down stairs and sought out Mrs. Condiment, whom she found in the housekeeper's little room, and to whom she said:

"Now, Mrs. Condiment, if uncle has any needlework wanted to be done, any buttons to be sewed on, or anything of the kind, just let me

have it; I've got a beautiful workbox, and I am just dying to use it!"

"My dear Miss Black——"

"Please to call me Capitola, or even Cap. I never was called Miss Black in my life, until I came here, and I don't like it at all!"

"Well then, my dear Miss Cap., I wish you would wait till to-morrow, for I just came in here in a great hurry to get a glass of brandy out of the cupboard to put in the sauce for the plum-pudding, as dinner will be on the table in ten minutes."

With a shrug of her little shoulders, Capitola left the housekeeper's room, and hurried through the central front hall and out at the front door, to look about and breathe the fresh air for a while.

As she stepped upon the front piazza she saw Major Warfield walking up the steep lawn, followed by Wool, leading a pretty, mottled, iron-gray pony, with a side-saddle on his back.

"Ah, I'm glad you're down, Cap! I come! look at this pretty pony! he is good for nothing as a working horse, and is too light to carry my weight, and so I intend to give him to you! You must learn to ride," said the old man, coming up the steps.

"Give him to me! I learn to ride! Oh! uncle! Oh, uncle! I shall go perfectly crazy with joy!" exclaimed Cap., dancing and clapping her hands with delight.

"Oh, well, a tumble or two in learning will bring you back to your senses, I reckon."

"Oh, uncle! oh, uncle! when shall I begin?"

"You shall take your first tumble immediately after dinner, when, being well-filled, you will not be so brittle and apt to break in falling!"

"Oh, uncle! I shall not fall! I feel I shan't! I feel I've a natural gift for holding on!"

"Come, come, get in! get in! I want my dinner!" said Old Hurricane, driving his ward in before him to the dining-room, where the dinner was smoking upon the table.

After dinner Cap., with Wool for a riding-master, took her first lesson in equestrianism.

She had the four great requisites for forming a good rider—a well-adapted figure, a fondness for the exercise, perfect fearlessness and presence of mind. She was not once in danger of losing her seat, and during that single afternoon's exercises, she made considerable progress in learning to manage her steed.

Old Hurricane, whom the genial autumn afternoon had tempted out to smoke his pipe in his arm chair on the porch, was a pleased spectator of her performances, and expressed his opinion that in time she would become the best rider in the neighbourhood, and that she should have the best riding-dress and cap that could be made at Tip-Top.

Just now, in lack of an equestrian dress, poor Cap. was parading around and around the lawn with her head bare and her hair flying, and her merino skirt exhibiting more ankles than grace.

It was while Old Hurricane still sat smoking his pipe and making his comments, and Capitola still ambled around and around the lawn, that a horseman suddenly appeared galloping as fast as the steep nature of the ground would admit, up towards the house, and before they could form an idea of who he was, the horse was at the block and the rider dismounted and standing before Major Warfield.

"Why, Herbert, my boy! back so soon! We didn't expect you for a week to come! This is sudden, indeed! So much the better! So much the better! Glad to see you, lad!" exclaimed Old Hurricane, getting up and heartily shaking the hand of his nephew.

Capitola came ambling up, and in the effort to spring from her saddle, tumbled off, much to the delight of Wool, who grinned from ear to ear, and of Old Hurricane, who, with an "I said so," burst into a roar of laughter.

Herbert Greyson sprang to assist her; but before he had reached the spot, Cap. had picked herself up, straightened her disordered dress, and now she ran to meet and shake hands with him.

There was such a sparkle of joy and glow of affection in the meeting between these two, that Old Hurricane, who saw it suddenly hushed his laugh, and granted to himself:

"Humph, humph, humph! I like that; that's better than I could have planned it myself: let that go on, and then, Gabe Le Noir, we'll see un-

der what name and head the old divided manor will be held!"

Before his mental soliloquy was concluded, Herbert and Capitola came up to him. He welcomed Herbert again with great cordiality, and then called to his man to put up the horses, and bade the young people follow him into the house, as the air was getting chilly.

"And how did you find your good friends, lad?" inquired Old Hurricane, when they had reached the sitting parlor.

"Oh, very well, sir, and very grateful for your offered kindness; and, indeed, so anxious to express their gratitude, that—that I shortened my visit, and came away immediately to tell you."

"Right, lad, right! You come down by the coach?"

"Yes, sir; and got off at Tip-Top, where I hired a horse to bring me here. I must ask you to let one of your men take him back to Mr. Morry, at the Antler's Inn, to-morrow."

"Surely, surely, lad! Wool shall do it."

"And so, Herbert, the poor woman was delighted with the prospect of better times?" said Old Hurricane, with a little glow of benevolent self-satisfaction.

"Oh, yes, sir! I delighted beyond all measure!"

"Poor thing! poor thing! See, young folks, how easy it is for the wealthy, by sparing a little of their superfluous means, to make the poor and virtuous happy. And the boy, Herbert, the boy?"

"Oh, sir! I delighted for himself, but still more delighted for his mother; for her joy was such as to astonish and astonish me!"

"Before that I had thought Marah Rocks a proud woman, but——"

"What—say that again!" exclaimed Major Warfield.

"I say that I thought she was a proud woman, but——"

"Thought who was a proud woman, sir?" roared Old Hurricane.

"Marah Rocks!" replied the young man, with wonder.

Major Warfield started up, seized the chair upon which he had sat, and struck it upon the ground with such force as to shatter it to pieces; then turning he strode up and down the floor with such violence that the two young people gazed after him in consternation and fearful expectancy. Presently he turned suddenly, strode up to Herbert Greyson, and stood before him.

His face was purple, his veins swollen until they stood out upon his forehead like cords, his eyes were protruded and glaring, his mouth clenched until the grizzly grey moustache and beard were drawn in, his whole huge frame was quivering from head to foot! It was impossible to tell what passion—whether rage, grief, or shame, the most possessed him, for all three seemed tearing his giant face to pieces.

For an instant he stood speechless, and Herbert feared he would fall into a fit; but the old giant was too strong for that! For one short moment he stood thus, and in a terrible voice he asked:

"Young man! did you—did you know—the name of that woman?"

"Sir, I know nothing but that she is the best and dearest of her sex!" exclaimed Herbert, beyond all measure amazed at what he heard and saw.

"Best and dearest!" thundered the old man—"oh, idiot! is she still a squire, and are you a dupe? But that cannot be! No, sir! it is I whom you both would dupe! Ah, I see it all! Now I tell you why you artfully concealed her name from me and your own promise. It shall not serve either you or her, sir! I break my promise—thus!"—bending and snapping his cane, and flinging the fragments behind his back—"there, sir! when you can make those dry ends of cedar grow together again, and bear green leaves, you may hope to reconcile Ira Warfield and Marah Rocks; I break my promise, sir, as she broke——"

The old man suddenly sunk back into the nearest chair, dropped his shaggy head and face into his hands, and remained trembling from head to foot, while the convulsive heaving of his chest, and the rising and falling of his huge shoulders, betrayed that his heart was nearly bursting with such suppressed rage as only can be forced from manhood by the fiercest anguish.

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I fell in love with and married a girl of sixteen, out of a log cabin! merely forsooth, because she had a pretty skin like the leaf of the exquisite japonica, soft, gray eyes like a timid dove, and a voice like a cooing turtle dove! because those delicate cheeks flushed, and those eyes fell when I spoke to her, and the cooing voice trembled when she replied! because the delicate face brightened when I came, and faded when I turned away! because

"Mother, will you tell me about my father, and also what is beyond this promised kindness of Major Warfield that has made you so happy?" he asked.

She ran out of the gate to meet him, seized and kissed the letter, and then, with her face burning, her heart palpitating, and her fingers trembling, she hastened into the house, threw herself into the little low chair by the fire, and opened the letter. It was from Herbert, and read as follows:

HURRICANE HALL, NOV. 30th, 1848.
 MY DEAREST AND BEST MRS. ROCKE,—May God
 strengthen you to read the few bitter lines I have
 written. Most unhappily, Major Warfield did
 not know exactly who you were, when he promised

so much. Upon learning your name he withdrew all his promises. At night, in his library, he told me all your early history. Having heard all, the very worst, I believe you as pure as an angel. So I told him. So I would uphold with my life and seal with my death. Trust yet in God, and believe in the earnest respect and affection of your grateful and attached son.

HENRY GUNYASON.

P.S.—For henceforth I shall call you mother. Quickly she finished reading, pressed the letter again to her lips, repressed it to the fire, saw it, like her hopes, shrivel to ashes, and then she arose, and with her trembling fingers clinging together, walked up and down the floor.

There were no tears in her eyes, but oh, such a look of unutterable woe on her pale, blank, despairing face.

Traverse watched her, and saw that something had gone frightfully wrong; that some awful revelation of fate or revulsion of feeling had passed over her in this dread hour.

Cautiously he approached her, gently he held his hand upon her shoulder, tenderly he whispered:

"Mother!"

She turned and looked strangely at him, then exclaiming:

"Oh, Traverse, how happy I was this day week!"

She burst into a flood of tears.

Traverse threw his arm around his mother's waist, and half-coaxed and half-bore her to her low chair, and sat her in it, and kissed by her side, and, embracing her fondly, whispered:

"Mother, don't weep so bitterly. You have me, an / nothing? Mother, I love you more than son ever loved his mother, or sister his sweetheart, or husband his wife. Oh, is my love nothing, mother?"

Only sobs answered him.

"Mother," he pleaded, "you are all the world to me—let me be all the world to you. I can be, mother—I can be it; try me. I will make every effort for my mother, and the Lord will bless us."

Still no answer but convulsive sobs.

"Oh, mother, mother, I will try to do for you more than ever son did for mother, or man for woman before, dear mother, if you will not break my heart by weeping so."

The sobbing abated a little, partly from exhaustion and partly from the soothing influences of the boy's loving words.

"Listen, dear mother, what I will do. In the olden times of chivalry, young knights bound themselves by sacred vows to the service of some lady, and labored long and perilously in her honor; to her, blood was spilled—for her, fields were won; but, mother, never yet told knight in the battle-field, or my lady-love as I will, in the battle of life, or my dearest lady—my own mother."

She reached out her hand, and silently pressed his.

"Come, come," said Traverse—"lift up your head and smile! We are young yet, both you and I; for after all we are not much older than your son and we too will journey up and down the hills of life together—all in all to each other; and when at last we are old, as we shall be when you are seventy-seven and I am sixty—we will leave all our fortune that we shall have made to found a home for widows and orphans—as we were, and we will pass out and go to heaven together."

Now, indeed this poor, modern Hagar looked—and smiled at the oddity of her Lhamo's far-reaching thought.

In that poor household grief might not be indulged. Marsh looked took down her work basket and sat down to finish a lot of shirts, and Traverse went out with his horse and saw, to look for a job at cutting wood for twenty-five cents a cord. Small beginnings of the fortune that was to found and endow asylums! But many a fortune has been commenced upon less!

Marsh looked had managed to dismiss her boy with a smile—but that was the last effort of nature; as soon as he was gone and she found herself alone, after tea, walked up in her eyes and rolled down her pale cheeks; sigh after sigh, heaved her bosom!

Ah! the transitory joy of the past week had been but the lightning's arrowy course scathing where it illuminated!

She felt as if this last blow, that had struck her

down from the height of hope to the depth of despair, had broken her heart—as if the power of reaction was gone, and she mourned as one who would not be comforted.

While she sat thus the door opened, and before she was aware of his presence, Herbert Greyson entered the room and came softly to her side. Ere she could speak to him he dropped upon his knee at her feet, and bowed his forehead lowly over the hand that he took and pressed to his lips. Then he arose and stood before her. This was not unnatural or exaggerated—it was his way of expressing the reverential sympathy and compassion he felt for her strange, life-long martyrdom.

"Herbert, you here? why, we only got your letter this morning," she said, in tones of gentle inquiry, as she arose and placed a chair for him.

"Yes, I could not bear to stay away from you, as such a time; I came up in the same mail coach that brought my letter; but I kept myself out of Traverse's sight, for I could not bear to intrude upon you in the first hour of your disappointment," said Herbert, in a broken voice.

"Oh! that need not have kept you away, dear boy; I did not cry much; I am used to trouble, you know; I shall get over this also—after a little while—and things will go on in the old way," said Marsh, looking up to repress the rising emotion that however overcame her, for dropping her head upon her "savior boy's" shoulder, she burst into a flood of tears and wept plentifully.

"Dear mother, be comforted," he said; "dear mother, be comforted."

CHAPTER XIII.

MARSH'S MEMORIES.

In the shade of the apple tree again
She saw a rider draw his rein;
And gazing down with a timid grace,
She felt his pleased eyes look her face.

WHITTIER.

"Dear Marsh, I cannot understand your strong attachment to that bronzed and grizzled old man, who has toiled toiled you so barbarously," said Herbert.

"Is he bronzed and gray?" asked Marsh, looking up with gentle pity in her eyes and tone.

"Why of course he is. He is sixty-three."

"He was forty-five when I first knew him, and he was very handsome then—at least I thought him the very perfection of manly strength, and beauty and goodness. True, it was the nature, warm beauty of the Indian summer—for he was more than middle-aged; but it was very genial to the chilly, loveless morning of my own early life," said Marsh, dropping her head upon her hand, and sliding into reminiscences of the past.

"Dear Marsh, I wish you would tell me all about your marriage and misfortunes," said Herbert, in a tone of the deepest sympathy and respect.

"Yes he was very handsome," continued Mrs. Roche, speaking more to herself than her companion; "his form was tall, full and stately; his fine face was lighted up by a pair of strong, dark gray eyes, full of fire and tenderness, and was surrounded by waving masses of jet black hair, and whiskers—they are gray now—you say, Herbert?"

"Gray and grizzled, and bristling up around his hard face, his thorn-bushes round a rock in winter!" said Herbert, bluntly, for he engaged his honest but inexperienced boyish heart to hear this wronged woman speak so enthusiastically.

"Ah! it is winter with him now, but then it was glorious Indian summer. He was a handsome, strong and ardent man. I was a young, slight, pale girl, with no beauty but the cold and colorless beauty of a statue; with no learning but such as I had picked up from a country school; with no love to bless my lonely life—for I was a friendless orphan, without even parents or relatives, and living by sufferance in a cold and loveless home."

"Poor girl!" murmured Herbert, in almost audible tones.

"Our log-cabin stood beside the military road leading through the wilderness to the Fort where he was stationed. And oh, when he came riding

by each day, upon his noble, coal-black steed, and in his martial uniform, looking so vigorous, haughty and kingly, he seemed to me almost a god to worship. Sometimes he drew rein in front of the old oak tree that stood in front of our cabin, to breathe his horse or ask for a draught of water. I used to bring it to him. Oh! then, when he looked at me, his eyes seemed to send new warmth to my chilled heart; when he spoke, too, his tones seemed to strengthen me; while he staid, his presence seemed to protect me."

"Ay, such protection as vultures gives to doves—covering and devouring them," muttered Herbert to himself. Mrs. Roche too absorbed in her reminiscences to heed his interruptions continued:

"One day he asked me to be his wife. I do not know what I answered, or if I answered anything. I only know that when I understood what he meant, my heart trembled with instinctive terror at its own excessive joy! We were privately married by the chaplain at the Fort. There were no accommodations for the wives of officers there. And besides, my husband did not wish to announce our marriage, until he was ready to take me to his pretty mansion in Virginia."

"Humph!" granted Herbert, inwardly for comment.

"But he built for me a pretty cabin in the woods below the fort, furnished it simply, and bred a half-bred Indian woman to wait on me. Oh, I was so happy! To my wintry spring of life summer had come. I was warm, rich and beautiful! There is a clause in the marriage service which enjoins the husband to cherish his wife. I do not believe many people ever stop to think how much is in that word. He did; he cherished my little thin, chill, feeble life, until I became strong, warm and beautiful. Oh! even as the blossomed earth, caused by it to brighten with life and blossom with flowers, and bloom with fruit, so did my husband enrich, and cherish, and bless my life. Such happiness could not and it did not last."

"Of course not," muttered Herbert to himself. "At first the fault was in myself. Yes, Herbert, it was! I need not look incredulous, or hope to cast all the blame on him! Listen, Herbert, grateful, adoring as I was, I was shy, timid, and bashful—never proving the deep love I bore my husband except by the most perfect self-abandonment to his will. All this deep though quiet devotion he understood as mere passive obedience void of love. As this continued he grew uneasy, and often asked me if I cared for him at all, or if it were possible for a young girl like me to love an old man like himself."

"A very natural question," thought Herbert.

"Well, I used to whisper in answer, 'Yes,' and still 'Yes.' But this never satisfied Major Warshaw. One day, when he asked me if I cared for him the least in the world I suddenly answered, that if he were to die I should throw myself across his grave, and lie there until death should release me! whereupon he broke into a loud laugh, saying, 'Mistake the lady doubt protest too much.' I was already blushing deeply at the unwonted vehemence of my own words, although I had spoken only as I felt the very, very truth; but his laugh and his jest so increased my confusion—that—in fact, I was the first and last time I ever did protest! Like Lear's Cordelia, I was tongue-tied—I had not words to assure him. Sometimes I went to think how poor I was in resources to make him happy. Then came another annoyance—my name and fame were freely discussed at the fort."

"A natural consequence," sighed Herbert.

"The younger officers discovered my woodland home, and often stole out to reconnoitre my cabin. Among them was Captain Le Noir, who, after he had discovered my retreat, picked acquaintance with Laura, my attendant. Making the woodland sports his pretext, he haunted the vicinity of my cabin, often stopping at the door to beg a cup of water, which of course was never denied, or else to offer a bunch of partridges, or a brace of rabbits, or some other game, the sports of his gun, which equally of course was never accepted. One beautiful morning in June, finding my cabin door open and myself alone, he ventured unbidden across my threshold, and by his free conversation, and bold admiration, offended and alarmed me. Some days afterwards, in the mess-room at the

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ble, coal-black steed, and looking so vigorous, hauled me to me almost a god he drew rein in front of and in front of our cabin, and asked for draught of water. Oh! then, when he seemed to send new warmth to his tongue, his tones were hoarse, his eyes were red; while he said, his

as he gives to doves, he mumbled, "I am sorry," and he interrupted con-

to be his wife. I do not, or if I answered any word! I was private. I was at the Fort. There for the wives of officers and undid not wish to be ready to be in Virginia."

Herbert, inwardly for a pretty cabin in the finished it simply, and woman is wait on me. I to my wintry spring of rain, rich and beautiful service which I do not wish to stop to think how much he cherished my little until I became strong, I even as the blessed sea, and glorifies the on his life and blossoms with fruit, so did my husband and bless my life. Such did not last."

"I thought to myself, in myself. Yes, Herbert, I look incredulous, or on him I listen, I was, I would also shy, proving the deep love I the most perfect self. All this deep thought and as mere passive As this continued he asked me if I cared for a young girl like himself."

"I thought Herbert, in answer, 'Yes,' and satisfied Major Warfield me if I cared for I suddenly answered, I'd throw myself across the death should release to a loud laugh, saying protest too much, I play at the unwelcome trial, although I had to be a truth; but I was by my confusion. First and last time I first's Cordelia, I was words to assure him, poor I was in re- Then came another name were freely dis-

"I sighed Herbert, discovered my wood- out to reconnoitre, a Captain Le Noir, and I retraced, picked up the text, he haught on me, stopping at the which of course was er a bunch of par- its, or some other of them, equally of One beautiful cabin door open free conversation, and alarmed me. He mess-room at the

fort, being elevated by wine, he boasted among his best makes of the intimate terms of friendly acquaintance, upon which he falsely asserted that he had the pleasure of standing with 'Warfield's little favorite,' as he insolently called me. When my husband heard of this, I learned for the first time of the terrible violence of his temper. It was awful! It frightened me almost to death. There was a duel, of course. Le Noir was very dangerously wounded—scattered across the face for life, and was confined many weeks to his bed. Major Warfield was also slightly hurt, and laid up at the Fort for a few days, during which I was not permitted to see him."

"Is it possible that even then he did not see your danger, and acknowledge your marriage, and call you to his bed-side?" inquired Herbert, impatiently.

"No! no! he had, all after suffering had been apoplexy! No! at the end of four days he came back to me; but we met only for bitter reproaches on his part, and sorrowful tears on mine. He charged me with ingratitude, upon account of the disparity in our years, and of preference for Captain Le Noir because he was pretty fellow! I knew this was not true of me. I knew that I loved my husband's very footprints better than I did the whole human race besides; but I could not tell him so then. Oh, in these days, though my heart was so full, I had so little power of utterance! There stood before me! he had been so ruddy and buoyant, now so pale from loss of blood, and so miserable, that I could have fallen and grovelled at his feet in sorrow and remorse at not being able to make him happy."

"There are some persons whom we can never make happy! It is not in them to be so!" commented Herbert.

"He made me promise never to see or to speak to Le Noir again—a promise eagerly given, but nearly impossible to keep. My husband spent as much time with me as he possibly could spare from his military duties, and looked forward with impatience to the autumn, when it was thought that he would be at liberty to take me home. He often used to tell me that we should spend our Christmas at his house, Hurricane Hall, and that I should play Lady Bountiful and distribute Christmas gifts to the negroes, and that they would love me. And oh! with what joy I anticipated that time of honor and safety and careless ease, as an acknowledged wife, in the home of my husband! There, too, I fondly believed our child would be born. All his old tenderness returned for me, and I was as happy if not as wildly joyful, as at first."

"'Twas but a lull in the storm," said Herbert. "Aye! 'twas but a lull in the storm, or rather before the storm! I do think that from the time of that duel, Le Noir had resolved upon our ruin. As soon as he was able to go out, he haunted the woods around my cabin, and continually laid in wait for me. I could not go out even in the company of my maid Lura to pick blackberries and wild plums, or gather forest roses, or to get fresh water at the spring, without being intercepted by Le Noir and his offensive admiration. He seemed to be ubiquitous! He met me everywhere—except in the presence of Major Warfield. I did not tell my husband, because I feared that if I did he would have killed Le Noir and died for the deed."

"Humph! it would have been 'good ridance of bad rubbish' in both cases!" muttered Herbert, under his teeth.

"But instead of telling him, I confined myself strictly to my cabin. One fatal day my husband, on leaving me in the morning, said that I need not wait up for him at night, for that he would be very late when he came, even if he came at all. He kissed me very fondly when he went away. Alas! alas! it was the last—last time! At night I went to bed disappointed, yet still so expectant that I could not sleep. I knew not how long I had waited thus, or how late it was when I heard a tap at the outer door, and heard the bolt withdrawn and a footstep enter, and a low voice asking:

"'Is she asleep?' and Lura's reply in the affirmative. Never doubting it was my husband, I lay there in pensive expectation of his entrance. He came in, and began to take off his coat in the

dark. I spoke, telling him that there were watchmen on the bureau. He did not reply, at which I was surprised; but before I could even repeat my words, the outer door was burst violently open, hurried footsteps crossed the entry, a light dashed into my room, my husband stood in the door in full military uniform, with a light in his hand, and the aspect of an avenging demon on his brow, and—

"Honours or horrors! the half-dressed man in my chamber was Captain Le Noir! I saw, and swooned away!"

"But you were saved! you were saved!" gasped Herbert, white with emotion.

"Oh, I was saved, but not from sorrow—not from shame! I awoke from that deadly swoon to find myself alone, deserted, cast away! Oh! torn out from the warmth and light and safety of my home in my husband's heart, and hurried forth shivering, faint and helpless upon the bleak world! and all this in twenty-four hours! Ah! I did not lack the power of expression then! I happiness had never given it to me—anguish conferred it upon me! that one fell stroke of fate cleaved the rock of silence in my soul, and the fountain—but my utterings rushed freely forth. I wrote to him—dropped into a well. I wrote to him, but was spurned away. I prayed him with tears to have pity on our unborn babe; but he laughed aloud in scorn, and called it by an approbrious name! Letters, prayers, tears, were all in vain. He never acknowledged our marriage, he now declared that he never would do so; he discarded me, disowned my child, and forbade us ever to take his name!"

"Oh, Marah! and you but seventeen years of age! without a father or a brother or a friend in the world to take your part! without even means to employ an advocate!" exclaimed Herbert, covering his face with his hands and sinking back.

"Nor would I have used any of those agencies, had I possessed them! If my wickedness and motherhood, my affections and my helplessness, were not advocates strong enough to win my cause, I could not have borne to employ others."

"Oh, Marah! with none to pity or to help! It was monstrous to have abandoned you so!"

"No! hush; consider the overwhelming evidence against me! I considered it even in the tempest and whirlwind of my anguish, and never once blamed and never once was angry with my husband. For I knew—not he, but the terrible circumstantial evidence had ruined me!"

"Ay, but did you not explain it to him?"

"How could I, alas! when I did not understand it myself? How Le Noir knew that Major Warfield was not expected home that fatal night—how he got into my house, whether by conspiring with my little maid, or by deceiving her, or lastly, how Major Warfield came to burst in upon him so suddenly, I did not know, and do not to this day!"

"But you told Major Warfield all that you have told me!"

"Oh, yes! again and again, calling Heaven to witness my truth! In vain! He had seen with his own eyes, he said. Against all I could say or do, there was built up a wall of scornful incredulity, on which I might have dashed my brains out to no purpose!"

"Oh, Marah! Marah! with none to pity or to save!" again exclaimed Herbert.

"Yes," said the meek creature, bowing her head. "God pitied and helped me! First he sent me a son that grew strong and handsome in body, good and wise in mind. Then He kept alive in my heart faith and hope and charity. He enabled me, through long years of unrelenting and ill-requited toil to live on, loving against anger, waiting against time, and hoping against despair."

"Why did you leave your western home and come to Staunton, Marah?" asked Herbert.

"To be where I could sometimes hear of my husband, without intruding on him. I took your

widowed mother in because she was his sister, though I never told her she was, lest she should wrong and scorn me. He had done

When she died I cherished you, Herbert, first because you were his nephew, but now, dear boy, for your own sake, alive."

"And I, while I live, will be a son to you. Madam! I will be your constant friend at Hurricane Hall. He talks of making me his heir,

Should he persist in such blind injustice, the day I come into the property, I shall turn it all over to his widow and son. But I do not believe that he will persist; I, for my part, still hope for the best."

"I also hope for the best, for whatever God wills is sure to happen, and his will is surely the best! Yes, Herbert, I also hope—beyond the grave!" said Marah, with a wan smile.

The little child that stood between the tall plated candlesticks on the mantel-piece struck twelve, and Marah rose from her seat saying:

"Traverse, poor fellow, will be home to his dinner. Not a word to him, Herbert, please! I do not wish the poor lad to know how much he has lost, and above all, I do not wish him to be prejudiced against his father."

"You are right, Marah," said Herbert, "for if he were told, the natural indignation that your wrongs would arouse in his heart, would totally unfit him to meet his father in a proper spirit, in that event for which I still hope—a future and a perfect family union!"

Herbert Greyson remained a week with his friends, during which time he paid the quarter's rent, and relieved his adopted mother of that cause of anxiety. Then he took leave and departed for Hurricane Hall, on his way to Washington City, where he was immediately going to pass his examination and await his appointment.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE WASTING HEART.

Then she took up the burden of life again, saying only, "It might have been." Alas for them both, and alas for us all, who vainly the dreams of youth recall, For of old words of lips or pen, The saddest are these—"It might have been!"

By the tacit consent of all parties, the meteor hope that had crossed and vanished from Marah's path of life was never mentioned again. Mother and son went about their separate tasks. Traverse worked at jobs all day and studied at night, and went twice a week to recite his lessons to his patron, Dr. Day, at Willow Hill. Marah sewed as usual all day, and prepared her boy's meals at the proper times. But day by day her cheeks grew paler, her form thinner, her step fainter. Her son saw this decline with great alarm. Sometimes he found her in a deep, troubled reverie, from which she would awaken with heavy sighs. Sometimes he surprised her in tears. At such times he did not trouble her with questions that he instinctively felt she could not or would not answer; but he came gently to her side, put his arms about her neck, stooped and laid her head against his breast, and whispered assurances of his "true love," and his boyish hopes of "getting on," of "making a fortune," and bringing "brighter days" for her.

And she would return his caresses, and with a faint smile reply that he "must not mind" her, that she was only "a little low-spirited," that she would "get over it soon."

But as days followed day, she grew visibly thinner and weaker, dark shadows settled under her hollow eyes and in her sunken cheeks. One evening, while standing at the table washing up her little tea service, she suddenly fell into her chair and fainted. Nothing could exceed the alarm and distress of poor Traverse. He hastened to fix her in an easy position, bathed her face and hands in vinegar and water—the only restoratives in their meagre stock—and called upon her by every loving epithet to live and speak to him. The fit yielded to his efforts, and presently, with a few fluttering inspirations, her breath returned and her eyes opened. Her very first words were attempts to re-assure her dismayed boy. But Traverse could no more be flattered. He entreated his mother to go at once to bed. And though the next morning, when she awoke, she looked not worse than usual, Traverse left home with a heart full of foreboding. Instead of turning down the street to go to his work in the town, he turned up the street towards the wooded hills beyond, now glowing in their gorgeous autumn foliage, and burning in the brilliant morning sun.

A half hour's walk brought him to a high and thickly-wooded hill, up which a private road led

be glad to have the lad
to give him instruction
positive mania for teach-

Oh, sir, how have we
your hands, and how
(it) cried Mrs. Hock-
the tears filled her gentle

more nothing, ma'am! I
do, do, whatever it may
y hard, indeed, if I am
ri load of thanks for do-
Like, when it does not
or a breath of effort."

is refusal of our thanks
obligation," said Mar-
ah,

am, will you persist in
it is all selfishness on my
will you. I shall like to
my office. I can make
—"

and will only make him
n, and will. He can not
counts, write my letters,
in the gig with me go
I have pretty much

describe for the sick poor
deligly.

madam, habit! 'ruling
' etc. I can't, for the
young people brand pilot
I must be off to see some
of me."

Traverse, my lad—
stant, I mean—are you
boy, and here his voice

laughed the doctor; "you
to the village as a com-

while the doctor held out
who, with her eyes full of
ring with emotion, began
in a good humored in-

woman, do—pray—hush!
you'll see! I do nothing
myself, and makes me
d bless you, madam!" he
her hand. "Come Tra-

cedily striding out of the
yard," to the gate before
and sorrow were still

you out again to-day,
of your mother and her
ctor Day, very seriously,
ents in the gig and drove

Traverse, your mother is
of death, in fact, she has

think her ill, then! I
in the fact that you never
her a prescription!" ex-

actly, for in one thing the
—he was sensitive and
and easily excited, and

or that in fact she has
ne, brace yourself up for
a heavy blow! Traverse!

Heaven! not that is
my mother starving! Oh,
doctor, it can't be—can't

two meals a day, and
almost beside himself

starvations!—side the to-
are slow starvations and
he is starving slowly and

al and body! her body is
a want of proper nutri-
ment of human sympathy,

and of social intercourse.
e must be changed if she

you now! I feel, I feel
truth! Something must
be done. What shall it

be done? What shall it
be done? What shall it

"I must reflect a little, Traverse," said the
doctor, thoughtfully, as he drove along with very
black reins.

"And, oh, how thoughtless of me! I forgot,
indeed I did, sir, when I so gladly accepted your
offer for me to read with you, I forgot if I spent
every day reading in your office, my mother would
sadly miss the dollar and a half a week I made by
doing little odd jobs in town."

"But I did not forget it, boy; rest easy upon
that score; and now let me reflect how we can
best serve your good little mother!" said the doc-
tor, and he drove slowly and thoughtfully along
for about twenty minutes before he spoke again,
when he said:

"Traverse, Monday is the first of the month.
You shall set in with me then. Come to me,
therefore, on Monday, and I think by that time, I
shall have thought upon some plan for your
mother. In the meantime, you may make as
much money at jobs as you can, and also you
must accept from me for a bottle or so of port
wine and a turkey or two! Tell her, if she demurs,
that it is the doctor's prescription, and that for
four of accidents, he always prefers to send his
own physician!"

"Oh, Doctor Day, if I could only thank you
night!" cried Traverse.

"Pooh, pooh! nonsense! there is no time for
it. Here we are at Spicer's grocery store, and
I suppose you are again employed. Yes? Well,
jump out then. You can still make half a day.
Mind, remember on Monday next, December 1st,
you enter my office as my medical student, and
by that time I shall have some plan arranged for
your mother. Good-bye! God bless you, lad!"

said the good doctor, as he drove off and left Tra-
verse standing in the genial autumn sunshine,
with his heart swelling and his eyes overflowing
with excess of gratitude and happiness.

CHAPTER XV.

CAPT. S. COUNTRY CAPTAINS.

"A willful elf—an uncle's child.
That half a pet and half a pest,
Was still reproved, entreated, caressed,
Yet never tamed, though never spoiled."

Capitola at first was delighted and half incred-
ulous at the change in her fortunes. The
spacious and comfortable mansion of which she
found herself the little mistress; the high rank of
the veteran officer who claimed her as his ward
and niece; the abundance, regularity, and re-
sponsible of her new life; the leisure, the priv-
ilege, the attendance of servants—all were all so out-
ragedly different from anything to which she had pre-
viously been accustomed, that there were times
when she doubted its reality, and distrusted her
own identity or her sanity.

Sometimes, suddenly startled by an intense re-
alization of the contrast between her past and her
present life, she would mentally inquire:

"Can this be really / myself, and not another?
/ the little houseless wanderer through the
streets and alleys of New York? / the little news-
girl in boys' clothes? / the wretched little va-
grant that was brought up before the Recorder,

and was about to be sent to the House of Refuge
for juvenile delinquency? Can this be I, Capitola,
the little outcast of the city, now changed into
Miss Black the young lady, perhaps the heiress of
a fine old country seat? calling a fine old military
officer uncle! settling a handsome income of
pocket-money handed upon me! having carriages,
and horses, and servants to attend me! No; it
cannot be! It's just impossible. No—I see how
it is. I'm crazy, that's what / am crazy! For
now I think of it, the last thing I remember of my
former life was being brought before the Recorder
for wearing boy's clothes. Now I'm sure that it was
upon that occasion that I went suddenly mad with
trouble, and all the rest is a lunatic's fancy. This
fine old country seat of which I vainly think my-
self the mistress, is just the pauper mad-house to
which the magistrates have sent me. This fine
old military officer whom I call my uncle is the
head-doctor. The servants who come at my call
are the keepers."

"There is no figure out of my past life in my
present one, except Herbert Greyson. But,
pshaw! he is not the nephew of his uncle! he is
only my old comrade Herbert Greyson, the

sailor lad, who comes here to the mad-house to
see me, and out of compassion humors all my
fancies."

"I wonder how long they'll keep me here?
Forever I hope. Until I get tired I'm sure! I
hope they won't care me. I vow I won't be cured.
It's a great deal too pleasant to be mad, and I'll
stay so. I'll keep on calling myself Miss Black,
and this mad-house my country seat, and the
doctor my uncle, and the keepers servants
until the end of time—so I will. Catch me com-
ing to my senses when it's so delightful to be mad.
I'm too sharp for that. I didn't grow up in Rag
Alley, New York, for nothing."

So, half in jest and half in earnest, Capitola
soliloquized upon her change of fortune.

Her education was commenced, but progressed
rather irregularly. Old Hurricane bought her
books and maps, plates and copy-books, set her
lessons in grammar, geography, and made her
write copies, do sums, and read and recite lessons
to him. Mrs. Condiment taught her the myster-
ies of cutting and basting, back-stitching and fell-
ing, hemming and seaming. A pupil as sharp as
Capitola soon mastered her tasks, and found her-
self each day with many hours of leisure, with
which she did not know what to do.

These hours were at first occupied with explor-
ing the old house, with all its attics, cud-
locks, and cellars; then in wandering through
old ornamental grounds, that were, even in
winter, so full and so richly beautiful with their
wild growth of evergreens; thence she extended
her researches into the wild and picturesque
country around.

She was never weary of admiring the great
forest that climbed the heights of the mountains
behind their house; the great bleak precipices of
gray rocks seen through the leafless branches of
the trees; the rugged falling ground that lay be-
tween the house, and between it and the river; and
the river itself, with its rushing stream and rag-
ing rapids.

Capitola had become a skilful as she had first
been a fearless rider. But her rides were con-
fined to the domain between the mountain range
and the river; she was forbidden to ford the one
or to climb the other. Perhaps if such a probi-
tion had never been made, Cap. would never
have thought of doing the one or the other; but
we all know the diabolical fascination there is in
forbidden pleasures for young human nature.
And so sooner had Cap. been commanded, if she
valued her safety, not to cross the water or climb
the precipice, than, as a natural consequence, she
began to wonder what was in the valley behind
the mountain, and what might be in the woods
across the river! and she longed, above all things,
to explore and find out for herself. She would
cagerly have done so, notwithstanding the probi-
tion; but Wool, who always attended her rides,
was sadly in the way; if she could only get rid
of Wool, she resolved to go upon a limited explor-
ing expedition.

One day a golden opportunity occurred. It
was a day of unusual beauty when autumn seem-
ed to be smiling upon the earth with her brightest
smiles before her passing away. In a word, it was
Indian summer. The beauty of the weather had
tempted Old Hurricane to ride to the country and
on particular business connected with his ward
herself.

Capitola, left alone, amused herself with her
tasks until the afternoon; then calling a boy,
she ordered him to saddle her horse and bring
him around.

"My dear, what do you want with your horse?
There is no one to attend you; Wool has gone
with his master," said Mrs. Condiment, as she
met Capitola in the hall, habited for her ride.

"In the old house and deprived of my afternoon
ride!" exclaimed Capitola, decidedly.

"But, my dear, you must never think of riding
out alone!" exclaimed the dismayed Mrs. Con-
diment.

"Indeed I shall though!—and glad of the
opportunity!" added Cap. mentally.

"But, my dear love, it is improper, imprudent,
dangerous."

"Why so?" asked Cap.

"Good gracious, upon every account. Suppose
you were to meet with ruffians; suppose—oh,
heaven!—suppose you were to meet with—Black
Donalds!"

"Mrs. Condiment, once for all do tell me who
this terrible Black Donald is! Is he the Evil
One himself, or the Man in the Iron Mask, or—who
is he?"

"Who is Black Donald? Good gracious, child,
you ask me who is Black Donald!"

"Yes—who is he? where is he? what is he,
that every cheek turns pale at the mention of his
name?" asked Capitola.

"Black Donald! Oh, my child, may you never
know more of Black Donald than I can tell you.
Black Donald is the chief of a band of ruthless
 desperadoes that infest these mountain roads, rob-
bing mail coaches, stealing negroes, breaking into
houses, and committing every sort of depredation.
Their hands are red with murder, and their souls
black with darker crimes."

"Darker crimes than murder?" ejaculated
Capitola.

"Yes, child, yes—there are darker crimes!
Only last winter he and three of his gang broke
into a solitary house where there was a lone
woman and her daughter, and—it is not a story
for you to hear, but if the people had caught
Black Donald then, they would have burnt him at
a stake. His life is forfeited by a hundred crimes.
He is an outlaw, and a heavy price is set upon his
head."

"And can no one take him?"

"No, my dear; at least, no one has been able
to do so yet. His very haunts are unknown, but
are supposed to be in concealed mountain cav-
erns."

"How I would like the glory of capturing
Black Donald!" said Capitola.

"You, child—you capture Black Donald! You
are crazy."

"Oh, by stratagem, I mean, not by force! Oh,
how I should like to capture Black Donald!—
There's my horse. Good-bye!"

And before Mrs. Condiment could raise an-
other objection, Capitola ran out, sprang into her
saddle, and was seen galloping down the hill
towards the river as fast as her horse could fly.

"My lord, but the major will be lopping his
finds it out," was good Mrs. Condiment's dis-
mayed exclamation.

Rejoicing in her freedom, Cap. galloped down
to the water's edge, and then walked her horse
up and down along the course of the stream until
she found a good fording place. Then gathering
up her riding-skirt and throwing it over the neck
of her horse, she plunged boldly into the stream,
and with the water splashing and foaming all
around her, urged him onward until they crossed
the river and climbed up the opposite bank. A
bride-path lay before her, leading from the for-
ding place through a deep wood. The path at-
tracted her; she followed it, charmed alike by the
solitude of the wood, the novelty of the scene,
and her own sense of freedom. But one thought
was given to the story of Black Donald, and that
was a reassuring one.

"If Black Donald is a mail-rober, then this
little bride-path is far enough off his path."

And so saying, she fairly galloped along, sing-
ing as she went, following the narrow path up
hill and down dale through the wintry woods.
Drawn on by the attraction of the unknown, and
deceiving herself by the continued repetition of
one resolve, namely:

"When I get to the top of the next hill, and
see what lies beyond, then I will turn back."

She galloped on and on—and on—and on—and
on! until she had put several miles between her-
self and her home, until her horse began to
exhibit signs of weariness and the level rays of
the setting sun were streaming redly through the
leafless branches of the trees.

Cap. drew rein on the top of a high, wooded
hill, and looked about her. On her left hand the
sun was sinking like a ball of fire below the hori-
zon; all around her everywhere were the wintry
woods far away, in the direction whence she
had come, she saw the tops of the mountains be-
hind Hurricane Hall, looking like blue clouds
against the southern horizon; the Hall itself and
the river below were out of sight.

"I wonder how far I am from home?" said
Capitola, uneasily; "somewhere between six and
seven miles, I reckon. Dear me, I didn't mean
to ride so far! I've got over a great deal of
ground in these two hours. I shall not get back
so soon; my horse is tired to death; it will take

me three hours to reach Hurricane Hall. Good gracious, it will be pitch dark before I get there. No, thank heaven, there'll be a moon. But won't there be a row, though? When I tell, I must turn about and lose no time. Come, Gyp! get up, Gyp! good horse! we're going home."

And so saying Capito turned her horse's head and urged him into a gallop.

She had gone on for about a mile and was growing dark, and her horse was again starting at his pace, when she thought she heard the sound of another horse's hoofs behind her. She drew rein and listened, and was surprised.

Now, without being the least of a coward, Capito thought of the loneliness of the woods, the lateness of the hour, her own helplessness, and—Black Donald! And thinking "discretion the better part of valor," she urged her horse once more into a gallop, for a few hundred yards; but the jaded beast soon lapsed into a trot, and subsided into a walk that threatened soon to come to a stand still.

The invisible pursuer gained on her. In vain she urged her steed with whip and voice; the poor beast would obey and trot for a few yards, and then fall into a walk.

The thundering footfalls of the pursuing horse were close in the rear.

"Oh, Gyp! it is possible that, instead of my capturing Black Donald, you are going to let Black Donald or somebody else catch me!" exclaimed Capito, in mock despair, as she urged her weaned steed.

In vain! The pursuing horseman was beside her! A strong hand was laid upon her bridle! A mocking voice was whispering in her ear:

"Whither away so fast, pretty one!"

CHAPTER XVI.

CAP'S FEARFUL ADVENTURE.

Who passes by this road so late?
Companion of the Majoraine!
Who passes by this road so late?
Say on, say! Old FANCY SONG.

Of a naturally strong constitution and adventurous disposition, and freed from fancy to danger, Capito possessed a high degree of courage, self-control, and presence of mind.

At the touch of that ruthless hand, at the sound of that gibing voice, all her faculties instantly collected and concentrated themselves upon the emergency. As by a flash of lightning she saw every feature of her imminent danger—the loneliness of the woods, the lateness of the hour, the recklessness of her fearful companion, and her own weakness. In another instant her resolution was taken and her course determined. So, when the stranger repeated his mocking question:

"Whither away so fast, pretty one?" she answered with animation:

"Oh, I am going home, and so glad to have company; for indeed I was dreadfully afraid of riding alone through these woods to-night!"

"Afraid, pretty one—what of?"

"Oh, of ghosts and witches, wild beasts, runaway negroes and—Black Donald!"

"Then you are not afraid of me?"

"Lord! no, indeed! I guess I ain't! why should I be afraid of a respectable-looking gentleman like you, sir?"

"And so you are going home—where is your home, pretty one?"

"On the other side of the river; but you need not keep on calling me 'pretty one,' it must be as tiresome to you to repeat it as it is to me to hear it."

"What shall I call you, then, my dear?"

"You may call me Miss Black, or if you are friendly, you may call me Capito."

"CAPITO!" exclaimed the man, in a deep and changed voice, as he dropped her bridle.

"Yes, Capito! what objection have you got to that? It is a pretty name, isn't it? but if you think it is too long, and if you feel very friendly, you may call me Cap."

"Well then, my pretty Cap, where do you live across the river?" asked the stranger, recovering his self-possession.

"Oh at a rum old place they call Hurricane Hall, with a rum old military officer they call Hurricane," said Capito, for the first time stealing a sidelong glance at her fearful companion.

It was not much Donald—that was the first impression to which she rashly jumped. He appeared to be a gentlemanly ruffian about forty years of age, well dressed in a black riding suit; black braver had drawn down close over his eyes; black hair and whiskers; heavy black eyebrows that met across his nose; drooping eyelids, and eyes that looked out under the corners of the lids; altogether a sly, sinister, cross between fox and tiger. It seemed Capito to expect no mercy there! After the first last words he seemed to have fallen in to thought for a moment, and then again he spoke:

"Well, my pretty Cap, how long have you been living at Hurricane Hall?"

"Ever since my guardian, Major Wardell, brought me from the city of New York, where I received my education—in the streets," she mentally added.

"Humph! why did you ride so fast, my pretty Cap?" he asked, eyeing her from the corner of his eyes.

"Oh, sir, because I was afraid, as I told you before; afraid of runaway negroes and wild beasts, and so on—but now with a good gentleman like you I don't feel afraid at all; and I'm very glad to be able to walk poor Gyp; because he's tired poor fellow!"

"Yes, poor fellow!" said the traveller, in a mocking tone, "he's tired; suppose you dismount and let him rest. Come, I'll get off, too, and we'll sit down here by the roadside and have a friendly conversation."

Capito stole a glance at his face. Yes, notwithstanding his light tone, he was grimly in earnest; there was no money to be expected from that sly, sinister, cruel face.

"Come, my pretty Cap, what say you?"

"I don't care if I do," she said, riding to the edge of the path, drawing rein, and looking down as if to examine the ground.

"Come, little beauty, must I help you off?" asked the stranger.

"N-n-no," answered Capito, with deliberate hesitation, "no, this is not a good place to sit down and talk; it's all full of brambles."

"Very well; shall we go on a little farther?"

"Oh, yes; but I don't want to ride fast, because it will tire my horse."

"You shall go just as you please, my angel," said the traveller.

They rode on very slowly for a mile further, and then having arrived at an open glade, the stranger drew rein, and said:

"Come, pretty lark, how down I here's a nice place to sit and rest."

"Very well, come help me off!" said Capito, pulling up her horse—then, as by a sudden impulse she exclaimed, "I don't like this place either! It's just on the top of the hill! so windy! and just see how rocky the ground is! No! I'll not sit and rest here, and that I tell you!"

"I am afraid you are trifling with me, my pretty bird! take care! I'll not be trifled with!" said the stranger.

"I don't know what you mean by trifling with you, any more than the dead. But I'll not sit down there on those sharp rocks, and so I tell you. If you will be civil and ride along with me until we get to the foot of the hill, I know a nice place, where we can sit down and have a good talk, and I will tell you all my travels, and you shall tell me all yours."

"Ex-actly—and where is that nice place?"

"Why, in the valley at the foot of the hill!"

"Come! come on, then."

"Slowly! slowly!" said Capito—"I won't be any more!"

"But the hill, down the gradual descent, is the control of the valley."

"You may now sit in a quarter of a mile on the opposite side of which was Hurricane Hall—and safety! The stranger drew rein, saying:

"Come, now, cuckoo! here we are at the bottom of the valley! now or never!"

"Oh, now, of course, you see I keep my promise," answered Capito, pulling up her horse.

The man sprang from his saddle and came to her side.

"Please to be careful, now, don't let my riding skirt get hung in the stirrup," said Capito, cautiously disengaging her drapery, rising in the saddle and giving the stranger her hand. In the

act of jumping out, she suddenly stopped and looked down, exclaiming:

"Good gracious! how very damp the ground is here in the bottom of the valley!"

"More objections, I suppose, my pretty one! but they won't serve you any longer. I am bent upon having a cozy chat with you, upon that you must be satisfied!" said the stranger, pointing to a little cleared space among the trees beside the path.

"Now, don't be cross; just see how damp it is there; it would spoil my riding-dress, and give me my death of cold."

"Humph," said the stranger, looking at her with a sly, grim, cruel resolve.

"I'll tell you what it is," said Cap, "I'm not witty nor amusing, nor will I pay to sit out in the night air to hear me talk; but since you wish it, and since you were so good as to guard me through these woods, and since I promised, why, damp as it is, I will even get off and talk with you!"

"That's my birding!"

"But hold on a minute. Is there nothing you can get to put there for me to sit on—no stump, nor dry stone?"

"No, my dear, I don't see any."

"Could you not turn your hat down and let me sit on that?"

"Ha, ha, but why, your weight would crush it as flat as a pancake!"

"Oh, I know now!" exclaimed Capito, with sudden delight. "You just spread your saddle cloth down there, and that will make a beautiful seat, and I'll sit and talk with you so nicely—only you must not want to stay long, because if I do get home soon I shall catch a cold!"

"You shall neither catch a cold nor a cold on my account, pretty one!" said the man, going to his horse to get the saddle-cloth.

"Oh, don't take off the saddle; it will detain you too long," said Cap, impatiently.

"My pretty Cap, I cannot get the cloth without taking it off," said the man, beginning to unbuckle the girth.

"Oh, yes, you can! you can draw it from under!" persisted Cap.

"Impossible, my angel!" said the man, lifting off the saddle from his horse and laying it carefully by the roadside.

Then he took off the gray, crimson saddle-cloth, and carried it into the little clearing and began carefully to spread it down.

Now was Cap's time. Her horse had recovered from his fatigue. The stranger's horse was in the path before her. While the man's back was turned, she raised her riding-whip, and with a shout, gave the front horse a sharp lash that sent him galloping furiously ahead. Then instantaneously putting whip to her own horse, she started into a run.

Hearing the shout, the lash, and the starting of the horses, the baffled villain turned and saw that his game was lost! He had been out-witted by a child! He gnashed his teeth and shook his fist in rage.

Turning, as she wheeled out of sight, Capito, I'm sorry to say—put her thumb to her nose, and whirled her finger in a circle, in a gesture more expressive than elegant.

CHAPTER XVII.

ANOTHER STORM AT HURRICANE HALL.

At this, Sir Knight grew high in wrath, and lifting bands and eyes up both. Three times he smote on stomach stone, from whence, at length, words broke out:

The moon was shining full upon the river and the household beyond, when Capito dashed into the water, and amid the sparkling and leaping of the foam, made her way to the other bank, and rode up the rugged ascent. On the outer side of the lawn wall, the moonbeams fell full upon the little figure of Pipat, waiting there.

"Why, Patsy, what takes you out so late as this?" asked Capito, as she rode up to the gate.

"Oh, Miss Caterpillar, I've waited for you! Ole Marse is dreadful, he is jes jes to burst the shingles off the roof with swearing! So I come out to warn you, so you can steal in the back way and go to your room so he won't see you, and I'll go and send Wool to put your horse away, and

then I'll

Marse horse

gone to be

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All this time

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Old Hurricane

until he had ra

he suddenly stopped and
very damp the ground is
a valley!"
suppose, my pretty one!
a any longer. I am bent
with you, upon that very
pointing to a little clasp
beside the path.
just see how damp it is
your riding-dress, and give
stranger, looking at her
solved.

"I," said Cap., "I'm not
it to pay to sit out in the
talk; but since you wish
so good as to guard me
and since I promised, why
on get off and talk with
me."

"Is there nothing
for me to sit on—no
any way."

"You hat down and let me
your weight would crush it

exclaimed Capitola, with
just spread your saddle
all will make a beautiful
with you so nicely—on-
I stay long, because if I
all catch a soldier."

and the soldier, now, going
told the man, a gold
little cloth.
the saddle; it will detain
impatiently.

cannot get the cloth with
the man, beginning to un-
draw it from un-

"I," said the man, lifting
and laying it careles-

ly, crimson saddle-cloth,
little clearing and began
to ride.

Her horse had recover-
stranger's horse was in
the man's back was
riding-wild, and with a
in a sharp lash that sent
there. Instantly—

own horse, she started
dash, and the starting of
in turned and saw that
had been out-witted by a
dash and shook his fist in

out of sight, Capitola
he thrust to the ground
or fir was the a
express the elegant.

R XVII.

HURRICANE RAIL.

low high in wrath,
eyes up both,
on stomach stom,
these words broke out

full upon the river and
and Capitola dashed into
parking and leaping of
to the other bank, and
On the outer side of
seams fell full upon the
ting there.

akes you out so late as
he rode up to the gate.
"I wait for you! O!
I let it to burst the
a swearing! So I come
in steal in the back way
won't see you, and I'll
your horse away, and

then I'll bring you up some supper, and tell Old
Marse how you've been home over so long, and
gone to bed with a werry bad head-ache."

"Thank you, Patty. It is perfectly astonishing
how easy lying is to you. You really deserve to
have been born in Rag Alley. But I won't trou-
ble the Recording Angel to make another entry a-
gainst you on my account."

"Yes, Miss," said Pimpot, who thought that
her mistress was contemplating her.

"And now, Patty, stand out of my way. I'm
going to ride straight up to the horse-block,
dismount, and walk right into the presence of
Major Warfield!" said Capitola, passing through
the gate.

"Oh, Miss Caterpillar, don't! don't! he'll kill
you, so he will!"

"Who's afraid?" muttered Cap. to herself,
as she put her horse to his mettle, and rode gaily
through the avenue lightly from her saddle.

Gathering up her train with one hand, and keep-
ing back her head, she swept along toward the
house with the air of a young princess.

There was a villain calculated to test her firm-
ness. Reader! did you ever see a raging lion
tearing to and fro the narrow limits of his cage,
and occasionally shaking the amphitheatre with his
irrepressible roar? or a furious bull tossing his
head and tail, and plunging up the earth with his
hoofs as he careered back and forth between the
boundaries of his pen? If you have seen and not-
iced these mad brutes, you may form some notion
of the front of Old Hurricane, as he storm-
ed up and down the floor of the front piazza.

Cap. had just ascended an actual danger of too ter-
rible a character to be frightened now by sound
and fury. Composedly she walked up into the
porch, and said:

"Good evening, uncle."

The old man stopped short in his furious
strides, and glared upon her with his terrible eyes.
Cap. stood firm without blanching, merely re-
marking:

"Now I have no doubt that in the days when
you went battling, that look used to strike terror
into the heart of the enemy, but it doesn't into
mine, somehow!"

"Mise!" roared the old man, bringing down
his cane with a resounding thump upon the floor.

"Mise! how dare you have the impudence to
face me, much less the—the—the assurance! the
effrontery!—the audacity! the *braun* to speak to
me!"

"Well, I declare," said Cap., calmly untying
her hat, "this is the first time I ever heard it was
impudent in a little girl to give her uncle good
evening."

The old man trotted up and down the piazza
two or three turns, then stopping short before the
delinquent, he struck his cane down upon the
floor with a ringing stroke, and thundered:

"Young woman! tell me instantly, and with out
prevarication, where you have been?"

"Certainly, sir; going to and fro in the earth,
and walking up and down in it!" said Cap.,
quietly.

"FLAMES AND FURIES, that is no answer at all!
Where have you been?" roared Old Hurricane,
shaking with excitement.

"Look here, uncle! if you go on that way you'll
have a fit presently!" said Cap., calmly.

"WHERE HAVE YOU BEEN?" thundered Old
Hurricane.

"Well, since you will know—just across the
river, and through the woods and back again!"

"And didn't I forbid you to do that, minion?"
and how dare you disobey me? I—
the creature of my bounty! you, the miserable little va-
grant that I picked up in the alleys of New York,
and tried to make a young lady of; but an old
proverb says—'You can't make a silk purse out
of a pig's ear!' How dare you, my little
begg, disobey your benefactor!—a man of my
age, character, and position?—I—I—I—"

Old Hurricane turned abruptly, and raged up and
down the piazza.

All this time Capitola had been standing quiet-
ly, holding up her train with one hand and her
raised her dark gray eyes to his face with one
long, indignant, scornful gaze, then turning
silently away, and entering the house, she left
Old Hurricane to storm up and down the piazza
until he had raged himself to rest.

Reader! I do not demand, far less approve, poor
Cap! I only talk her werry and describe her, as I
have seen her, leaving her to your charitable in-
terpretation.

Next morning Capitola came down into the
breakfast-room with one idea prominent in her
head, little head—to which she mentally gave ex-
pression:

"Well, old I like that old man, he must not per-
mit himself to talk to me in that indecent strain,
and so he must be made to know."

When she entered the breakfast-room, she
found Mrs. Condiment already at the head of the
table, and Old Hurricane at the foot. He had
quite got over his rage, and turned around blandly
to welcome her, saying:

"Good-morning, Cap."

Without taking the slightest notice of the
salutation, Cap. called on to her seat.

"Humph! did you hear me say, 'Good morn-
ing, Cap.'?"

Without paying the least attention, Capitola
reached out her hand and took a cup of coffee
from Mrs. Condiment.

"Humph! Humph! Good-morning, Capito-
la!" said Old Hurricane, with marked emphasis.
Apparently without hearing him, Cap. helped
herself to a buckwheat-cake, and daintily buttered
it.

"Humph! humph! humph! well, as you said
yourself, 'I don't care, it's better than a speaking
one!'" said Old Hurricane, as he sat down
and exhibited into silence.

Doubtless the old man would have done into
another passion, had that been possible; but,
in truth he had spent so much vitality in rage
number one, that he had none left to sustain
rage number two. Besides, he knew it would be
necessary to blow up Bill Ezy, his lazy over-
sight, before night and perhaps saved himself for that
performance. He finished his meal in silence,
and went out.

Cap. finished her; and, tempering justice with
mercy, went up stairs to his room, and looked
over all his appointments and belongings to find
what she would do for his extra comfort; and
found a job in very lining his warm slippers, and
the sleeves of his dressing-gown.

They met again at the dinner-table.

"How do you do, Cap?" said old Hurricane,
as he took his seat.

Capitola poured out a glass of water and drank
it in silence, and without looking at him.

"Oh! very well! a dumb devil, de." ex-
claimed Old Hurricane addressing himself to his
dinner. When the meal was over they again
separated. The old man went to his study to ex-
amine his farm books, and Capitola back to her
chamber to finish lining his warm slippers.

Again at the dinner-table.

"Well, Cap. is the dumb devil cast out
yet?" he said, sitting down.

Capitola took a cup of tea from Mrs. Condi-
ment and passed it on to him in silence.

"Humph, not gone yet, eh?—poor girl! how it
must try you!" said Old Hurricane.

After supper the old man found his dressing-
gown and slippers before the fire all ready for
his use.

"Cap., you monkey! you did this," he said,
turning around. But Capitola had already left
the room.

Next morning at breakfast there was a rep-
etition of the same scene. Early in the forenoon
Major Warfield ordered his horses, and, attended
by Wool, rode up to "Tip-Tope." He did not return
either to dinner or tea, but as that circumstance
was not unusual it gave no one uneasiness. Mrs.
Condiment kept his supper warm, and Capitola
had his dressing-gown and slippers ready.

Old man arrived. He came in quite gaily saying:
"Now, Cap, I think I have found a *tailman*
at last to cast out that 'dumb devil.' I heard
you wishing for a watch the other day. Now, as
devils belong to eternity, and have no business
with time, of course the sight of this little
time-keeper must put yours to flight!" and so
saying he laid upon the table, before the eyes of
Capitola, a beautiful little gold watch and chain.

She glanced at it, as it lay glittering and sparkling
in the lamp-light, and then turned abruptly and
walked away.

"Humph! that's always the way the devils
do fly when they can't stand shot!"

Capitola deliberately walked back, laid a paper
over the little watch and chain, as if to cover its
fascinating sparkle and glitter, and said:

"Uncle, your bounty is large, and your pro-
sent is beautiful, but there is something that
poor Capitola values more than that—"

She paused, dropped her head upon her bosom,
and a sudden blush flamed up over her face,
and tear-drops glistened in her downcast eyes; she
put both hands before her burning face for a
moment, and then dropping them, resumed:

"Uncle! you rescued me from misery, and
perhaps, perhaps, early death! you have heaped
benefits and bounties upon me without measure!
you have placed me in a home of abundance,
honor and security! I all this, if I were not
grateful, I should deserve no less than death!

But, uncle, there is a sin that is worse, or at least
more ungenerous, than ingratitude! it is to put a
helpless fellow creature under heavy obligations,
and then treat that grateful creature with un-
deserved contempt and cruel unkindness!" Once
more her voice was choked with feeling.

For some reason or other, Capitola's tears per-
haps because they were so rare, always moved
Old Hurricane to his heart's centre; going to-
wards her softly he said:

"Now, my dear, now my child, now my little
Cap., you know it was all for your own good!
Why, my dear, I never for one instant regretted
bringing you to the house, for I could not part
with you for a kingdom! Come now, my child,
come to the heart of your uncle."

Now, the soul of Capitola naturally abhorred
sentiment! If ever she gave way to serious emo-
tion, she was sure to avenge herself by being more
capricious than before. Consequently flinging
herself out of the caressing arms of Old Hurricane
she exclaimed:

"Uncle! I won't be treated with both kicks and
half-pennies by the same person—and so I tell
you! I'm not a cat to be fed with roast-beef and
beaten with a stick! nor, nor, nor. The Turk's slave
to be caressed and oppressed as her master likes!
—such abuse as you heaped upon me, I never
heard—no, not even in Rag Alley!"

"Oh, my dear, my dear, for heaven's sake for-
get Rag Alley!"

"I won't! I won't! I go back to Rag Alley, for
a very little more! Freedom and I are even
sweeter than wealth and honors!"

"Ah, but I wouldn't let you, my little Cap."

"Then I'd have you up before the nearest
magistrate, to show by what right you detained
me! Ah, ha! I wasn't brought up in New York
for nothing!"

"Where-ew! and all this because, for her own
good, I gave my own niece and ward a little gentle
admonition."

"Gentle admonition! Do you call that gentle
admonition! Why, uncle, you are enough to
frighten most people to death with your fury!
You are a perfect dragon! a griffin! a maniac
beast! a Bengal tiger! a Numidian lion! I declare
if I don't write and ask some menagerie man to
send a party down here to catch you for his show.
You'd draw, I tell you!"

"Yes! especially with you for a keeper to stir
me up once in a while with a long pole!"

"And that I'd engage to do—*dear!*"

The entrance of Mrs. Condiment with the tea-
tray put an end to the controversy. It was, as
yet, a drawn battle.

"And what about the watch, my little Cap?"

"Take it back, uncle, if you please."

"But they won't have it back! it has got your
initials engraved upon it—look here," said the old
man, holding the watch to her eyes.

"C. L. N. Those are not my initials," said
Capitola, looking up with surprise.

"Why, so they are not! the blundering fools have
made a mistake!—but you'll have to take it back."

"No, uncle, keep it for the present," said Cap-
itola, who was too honest to take a gift that she
felt she did not deserve, and yet too proud to con-
fess as much.

Peace was proclaimed—for the present.

Alas! 'twas but of a short continuance. Dur-
ing these two days of coolness and enforced quiet-
ude Old Hurricane had gathered a store of bad
humors that required expenditure.

So the very next day something went wrong
upon the farm, and Old Hurricane came storming
home, driving his over-zealous, poor, old, meek
Billy Ezy and his man Wool, before him.

Bill Ezy was whimpering; Wool was sobbing aloud; Old Hurricane was roaring at them both as he drove them on before him—swearing that Ezy should go and find himself a new home, and Wool should go and seek another master.

And for this cause Old Hurricane was driving them on to his study, that he might pay the overseer his last month's salary, and give the servant a written order to find a master.

He raged past Capitola in the hall, and meeting Mrs. Condiment at the study door, ordered her to bring in her account book directly, for that he would not be imposed upon any longer, but meant to drive all the lazy, idle dishonest servants and time servers from the house and land!

"What's the matter now?" said Capitola, meeting her.

"Oh, child, he's in his terrible tantrums again! He gets into these ways every once in a while, when a young cat perishes, or a sheep is stolen, or anything goes amiss, and then he abuses us all for a pack of loafers, sluggards and thieves, and *japs* us off and orders us off! We don't go, of course, because we know he doesn't mean it; still it is very trying to be talked to so. Oh! I should go, but, Lord, child! he's a bear, but we love him."

Just as she spoke the study door opened, and Bill Ezy came out sobbing, and Wool lifting up his voice and fairly roaring.

Mrs. Condiment stepped out of the parlor door.

"What's the matter, you blockhead?" she asked of Wool.

"Oh! Boo-hoo-woo! Ole'Marse been and done and gone and give me line to find an—an—another Boo-hoo-woo!" sobbed Wool, ready to break his heart.

"Give you a line to find another Boo-hoo-woo! I wouldn't do it if I were you, Wool!" said Capitola.

"Give me the paper, Wool," said Mrs. Condiment, taking the "permit" and tearing it up, and adding:

"There! now you go home to your quarters, and keep out of your old master's sight until he gets over his anger, and then you know very well that it will be all right. There! go along with you."

Wool quickly got out of the way, and made room for the overseer, who was snivelling like a whipped school-boy, and to whom the house-keeper said:

"I thought you were wiser than to take this to heart, Mr. Ezy!"

"Oh, mum! what could you expect?—an old servant as has served the major faithfully these forty years, to be discharged at sixty-five! *Oh! Boo-hoo-woo!*" whimpered the overseer.

"But then you have been discharged so often, you ought to be used to it by this time! you get discharged just as Wool gets sold—about once a month! but do you ever go?"

"Oh, mum! but he's in almost this time! *Just he's, mum! terrible in almost!* and all about that misfortune! look-tail out getting stole! I know how it wur, some of Black Donald's gang as done it! as if I could always be on my guard against they devils! and he means it this time, mum! he's terrible in almost!"

"But! he's always in earnest for as long as it lasts! go home with your family, and to-morrow go about your business, as usual."

Here the study bell rang violently and Old Hurricane's voice was heard calling—"Mrs. Condiment! Mrs. Condiment!"

"Oh, lor! he's coming," cried Billy Ezy, running off as fast as age and grief would let him.

"Mrs. Condiment! Mrs. Condiment!" cried the voice.

"Yes, sir! yes!" answered the housekeeper, hurrying to obey the call.

Capitola walked up and down the hall for half an hour, at the end of which Mrs. Condiment came out "with a smile on her lips and a tear in her eye," and saying:

"Well, Miss Capitola, I'm paid off and discharged, also!"

"What for?"

"For aiding and abetting the rebels!—in a word, for trying to comfort poor Ezy and Wool."

"And are you going?"

"Certainly not! I shan't budge! I would not treat the old man so badly as to take him at his word!" and, with a strange smile, Mrs. Con-

diment hurried away just in time to escape Old Hurricane, who came raving out of the study.

"Get out of my way, you beggar!" he cried, pushing past Capitola, and hurrying from the house.

"Well, I declare, that was pleasant!" thought Cap., as she entered the parlor.

"Mrs. Condiment, what will he say when he comes back and finds you all here still?" she asked.

"Say?—nothing. After this passion is over, he will be so exhausted that he will not be able to get up another rage in two or three days."

"Where has he gone?"

"To Tip-Top; and stone, too; he was so mad with poor Wool that he wouldn't even permit him to attend."

"Alone? has he gone lone? *Oh, won't I give him a dose when he comes back!*" thought Capitola.

Meanwhile Old Hurricane stormed along towards Tip-Top, lashing off the poor dogs that wished to follow him, and cutting at every living thing that crossed his path. His business at the village was to get bills printed and posted, offering an additional reward for the apprehension of "the marauding outlaw Black Donald." That day he dined at the village tavern—"The Antlers," by Mr. Morry—and differed, disputed, or quarrelled, as the case might be, with every man with whom he happened to come in contact.

Towards evening he set off for home. It was much later than his usual hour of returning; but he felt weary, exhausted, and indisposed to come into his own dwelling where his furious temper had created so much unhappiness. Thus, though it was very late, he did not hurry; he almost hoped that every one might be in bed when he should return. The moon was shining brightly when he passed the gate and rode up the evergreen avenue to the horse-block in front of the house. There he dismounted and walked up into the piazza, where a novel vision met his surprised gaze.

It was Capitola, walking up and down the floor, with rapid, almost masculine, strides, and apparently in a state of great excitement.

"Oh, is it you, my little Cap? Good evening, my dear," he said, very kindly.

Capitola "pulled up" in her striding walk, wheeled around, faced him, drew up her form, folded her arms, threw back her head, set her teeth, and glared at him.

"What the demon do you mean by that?" cried Old Hurricane.

"Sir!" she exclaimed, bringing down one foot with a sharp stamp—"Sir, how dare you have the impudence to face me, much less this—the—the brass! the bronze! the coral! to speak to me?"

"Why, what in the name of all the Innates in Bedlam does the girl mean? Is she crazy?" he exclaimed the old man, gazing upon her in astonishment.

Capitola turned and strode furiously up and down the piazza, and then, stopping suddenly, and facing him, with a sharp stamp of her foot, exclaimed:

"Old GENTLEMAN, tell me instantly, and without prevarication, where have you been?"

"To the demon with you! What do you mean? have you taken leave of your senses?" demanded Old Hurricane.

Capitola strode up and down the floor a few times, and stopping short and shaking her fist, exclaimed:

"DIDN'T you know, you head!—ong, reckless, desperate, frantic veteran! didn't you know the jeopardy in which you placed yourself by riding out alone at this hour? Suppose three or four great runaway negroes had sprung out of the bushes—and—"

and strode up and down the floor; then, pausing suddenly before him, with a stern stamp of her foot and a fierce glance of her eye, she continued:

"You shouldn't have come back *here* any more! No dishonest old man should have entered the house of which I call myself the mistress!"

"Oh, I told I take! ha-ha-ha! Good, Cap., good! You are holding up the slaves before me; but your mirror is not quite large enough to reflect 'Old Hurricane,' my dear—I *love* you one," said the old man, as he passed into the house, followed by his capricious favourite.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE DOCTOR'S DAUGHTER.

Oh, her smile, it seemed half holy, As if drawn from some saint's more far, Than our common jesting are. And if any painter drew her, He would paint her answers, With a halo round her hair.

R. B. BROWNHO.

On the appointed day, Traverse took his way to Willow Heights, to keep his trust and enter upon the medical studies in the general doctor's office. He was anxious also to know if his patron had as yet thought of any plan by which his mother might better her condition. He was met at the door by little Mattie the parlor maid, who told him to walk right up stairs into the study, where his master was expecting him.

Traverse went up quietly and opened the door of that pleasant study-room, to which the reader has already been introduced, and the windows of which opened on the upper front piazza.

Now, however, as it was quite cold, the windows were down, though the blinds were open, and through them streamed the golden rays of the morning sun that fell glistening upon the fairy hair and white raiment of a young girl, who sat reading before the fire.

The doctor was not in the room, and Traverse in his native modesty was just about to retreat, when the young creature looked up from her book, and seeing him, arose with a smile, and came forward, saying:

"You are the young man whom my father was expecting, I presume. Sit down, he has stepped out, but will be in again very soon."

Now, Traverse being unaccustomed to the society of young ladies, felt excessively bashful when suddenly coming into the presence of this refined and lovely girl. With a low bow and a deep blush he took the chair she placed for him.

With natural politeness, she closed her book and addressed herself to entertaining him.

"I have heard that your mother is an invalid, I hope she is better?"

"I thank you—yes, ma'am—Miss," stammered Traverse, in painful embarrassment. Understand the timidity of the beautiful boy, and seeing that her efforts to entertain, only troubled him, she placed the newspapers on the table before him, saying:

"Here are the morning journals if you would like to look over them, Mr. Rocks," and then she resumed her book.

"I thank you, Miss," replied the youth, taking up a paper, more for the purpose of covering his embarrassment, than for any other.

Mr. Rocks! Traverse was seventeen years of age, and had never been called Mr. Rocks before! This young girl was the very first to compliment him with the manly title, and he felt a boyish gratitude to her and a harmless wish that his well-brushed Sunday suit of black was not quite so rusty and thread-bare, tempered by an innocent exultation in the thought that no gentleman in the land could exhibit fresher linen, brighter shoes or cleaner hands than himself.

But not many seconds were spent in such ecstasies. He stole a glance at his lovely companion sitting on the opposite side of the fire-place—he was glad to see that she was already deeply engaged in reading, for it enabled him to observe her, without embarrassment or offence. He had scarcely dared to look at her before, and had no distinct idea of her beauty.

There had been for him only a vague, dazzling vision of a golden-haired girl in floating white raiment, wafting the fragrance of violets as she moved, and with a voice sweeter than the notes of the cushat dove as she spoke.

Now he saw that the golden hair flowed in ringlets around a fair, rosy face, soft and bright with feeling and intelligence. As her dark blue eyes followed him, a smile intense with meaning deepened the page, a smile intense with meaning deepened the expression of her countenance.

That intense smile—it was like her father's, only lovelier—more heavenly. That intense smile! It had, even on the old doctor's face, an inexpressible charm for Traverse—but on the lovely young face of his daughter it exercised an ineffable fascination! So earnest and so unconscious became the gaze of poor Traverse that he was only brought to a sense of propriety by the opening of the door, and the entrance of the doctor, who exclaimed:

TER XVII.

ON'S GARDEN.

It seemed half holy. But I dare say, you've heard me speak about it—
ed," concluded the doctor, drawing his chair up to the reading-table, sitting down and folding his dressing-gown around his limbs.

"Well, Traverser, how is the little mother?" he presently inquired.
"I was just telling Miss Day, that she was much better, sir," said Traverser.
"Ah ha! ah ha!" muttered the doctor to himself—"that's Kitchen physic—roast Turkey and port wine! and moral medicine, hope! and mental medicine, sympathy."

"Well, Traverser," he said aloud, "I have been racking my brain for a plan for your mother—and to no purpose! Your mother should be in a house of peace, plenty and cheerfulness!"

"I can speak before my little Clara here!—I never have any secrets from her—Your mother wants good living, cheerful company, and freedom from toll and care! The situation of gentleman or lady's housekeeper in some home of abundance, where she would be esteemed as a member of the family would suit her! but where to find such a place! I have been inquiring without mentioning her name, of course—among all my friends, but not one of them wants a housekeeper, or knows a soul who does want one! and I am 'at sea on the subject.' I'm ashamed of myself for not succeeding better!"

"Oh, sir, do not do yourself so great an injustice," said Traverser.
"Well the fact is, after boasting so confidently that I would find a good situation for Mrs. Rooke, lo and behold! I have provided myself as *yet only* a boaster!"

"Father," said Clara, turning upon him her sweet eyes.
"Well, my love?"

"Perhaps Mr. Rooke would do us the favor to come *here* and take charge of our household."

"Eh! what! I never thought of that! I never had a housekeeper in my life!" exclaimed the doctor.

"No, sir, because you never needed one before, but now we really do. Aunt Moggy has been a very faithful and efficient manager, although she is a colored woman; but she is getting very old."

"Yes, and deaf, and blind, and careless! I know she is! I have no doubt in the world she scours the copper with the table napkins, and washes her face and hands in the soup tureen."

"Oh, father!" said Clara.
"Well, Clara, at least she wants looking after."

"Father, she wants rest in her old age."

"No doubt of it! no doubt of it!"

"And father, I intend, of course, in time, to be your housekeeper; but having spent all my life at a boarding-school, I know very little about domestic affairs, and I require a great deal of instruction; so I really do think that there is no one needs Mrs. Rooke's assistance more than we do, and if she will do us the favor to come, we cannot do better than to engage her."

"To be sure! to be sure! Lord bless my soul! to think it never should have entered my stupid old head, until it was put there by Clara! Here was I searching blindly all over the country for a situation for Mrs. Rooke, and wanting her all the time more than any one else! That's the way with us all, my boy! While we are looking away off yonder for the solution of our difficulties, the remedy is all the time lying just under our noses!"

"But so close to our eyes father that we cannot see it!" said Clara.
"Just so Clara! Just so! You are always ahead of me in ideas! Now, Traverser when you go home this evening you shall take a note to your mother, setting forth our wishes—mine and Clara's; if she accedes to them she will make us very happy."

"With a great deal of manly strength of mind Traverser had all his mother's tenderness of heart. It was with difficulty he could keep back his tears or control his voice, while he answered:

"I remember reading, sir, that the young queen of England when she came to her throne wished to provide handsomely for an orphan companion of her childhood; and seeing that no office in her household suited the young person, she created one for her benefit. Sir, I believe you have made one for my mother."

"Not at all! not at all! If she doesn't come to look after our housekeeping, old Moggy will be greasing our griddles with tallow candle ends next! If you don't believe me ask Clara ask Clara!"

"Not believe him! If the doctor had affirmed that the moon was made of mouldy cheese, Traverser would have deemed it his duty to stoutly maintain that astronomical theory. He felt hurt that the doctor should use such a phrase."

"Yes, indeed we really do need her, Traverser," said the doctor's daughter.
"Traverser!" It had made him proud to hear her call him, for the first time in his life, "Mr. Rooke," but it made him deeply happy to hear her call him "Traverser." It had such a *disturbing* sound coming from this sweet creature. How he wished that she really *were* his sister! but then the idea of that fair, golden-haired, blue-eyed, white-robed angel being the sister of such a robust, rugged, sun-burned boy as himself! The thought was so absurd, extravagant, impossible, that the poor boy heaved an unconscious sigh.

"Why, what's the matter, Traverser? What are you thinking of so intently?"

"Of your great goodness, sir, among other things."

"But I said the bear no more of that. I please myself," said the doctor; "and now, Traverser, let's go to work decently and in order; but first let me settle *this* point! If your good little mother determines in our favor, Traverser, then of course you will live with us also, so I shall have my young medical assistant always at hand! That will be very convenient, and then we shall have no more long, lonesome evenings, Clara, shall we, dear?"

"And now, Traverser, I will mark out your course of study, and set you to work at once."

"Shall I leave the room, father?" inquired Clara.
"No, no, my dear; certainly not. I have not had you home so long as to get tired of the sight of you yet. No, Clara, no, you are not in our way—is she, Traverser?"

"Oh, sir, the idea—" stammered Traverser, blushing deeply to be so appealed to.
"In *his* way! why, a pang had shot through his beam at the very mention of her going."

"Very well, then; here, Traverser—here are your books, you are to begin with this one, keep this Medical Dictionary at hand for reference. Bless me! it will bring back my own student days to go over the ground with you, my boy."

Clara took her work-box and sat down to stitch a pair of dainty wristbands for her father's shirts. The doctor took up the morning papers.

Traverser opened his book and commenced his readings. It was a quiet but by no means a dull circle. Occasionally Clara and her father exchanged words, and once in a while the doctor directed over his pupil's shoulder, or gave him a

Traverser studied *con amore* and with intelligent appreciation. The presence of the doctor's lovely daughter, far from disturbing him, calmed and steadied his soul into a state of infinite content. If the presence of the beautiful girl was over to become an agitating element, the hour had not yet come.

So passed the time until the dinner-bell rang. By the express stipulation of the doctor himself, it was arranged that Traverser should always dine with his family. After dinner an hour, which the doctor called a digestive hour, was spent in totering about, and then the studies were resumed.

At six o'clock in the evening Traverser took leave of the doctor and his fair daughter and started for home.

"Be sure to persuade your mother to come, Traverser," said Clara.
"She will not need persuasion; she will be only too glad to come, Miss," said Traverser, with a deep bow, turning and hurrying away towards home. With "winged feet" he ran down the wooded hill and got into the highway and hastened on with such speed that in half an hour he reached his mother's little cottage. He was all agog with joy and eagerness to tell her the good news.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE DESIGNED SOUT.

This day he bread and peace my lot;
All else beneath the sun
Thou knowest it best bestowed or not.
And let thy will be done.
—Pope.

Poor Marah Rooke had schooled her soul to resignation, had taught herself just to do the duty of each day as it came, and leave the future—where indeed it must always remain—in the hands of God. Since the doctor's delicate and judicious kindness had cherished her life, some little health and cheerfulness had returned to her. Upon this particular evening of the day upon which Traverser entered upon his medical studies, she felt very hopeful.

The little cottage fire burned brightly; the hearth was swept clean; the tea-kettle was singing over the blaze; the tiny tea-table, with its two cups and saucers, and two plates and two knives, was set; everything was neat, comfortable and cheerful for Traverser's return. Marah sat in her little low chair, putting the finishing touches to a set of fine shirts.

She was not anxiously looking for her son, for he had told her that he should stay at the doctor's until six o'clock; therefore she did not expect him until seven.

But so fast had Traverser walked that just as the minute hand pointed to half-past six, the latch was raised and Traverser ran in—his face flushed with joy.

The first thing he did was to run to his mother, fling his arms around her neck, and kiss her. Then he threw himself into his chair to take breath.

"Now, then, what's the matter, Traverser? You look as if somebody had left you a fortune."

"And so they have or as good as do so!" exclaimed Traverser, panting for breath.
"What in the world do you mean?" exclaimed Marah, her thoughts naturally flying to Old Hurricane, and suggesting his possible repentance or relenting.

"Read that, mother, read that!" said Traverser, eagerly putting a note in her hand.
She opened it, and read:

WILLIAM HEIGHT—Monday.
Dear MAM—My little daughter Clara, fourteen years of age, has just returned from boarding school to pursue her studies at home. Among other things, she must learn domestic affairs, of which she knows nothing. If you will accept the position of housekeeper and matronly companion of my daughter, I shall make the terms such as shall reconcile you to the change. We shall also do all that we can to make you happy. Traverser will explain to you the details. Take time to think of it, but if possible let us have your answer by Traverser when he comes to-morrow. If you accede to this proposition you will give my daughter and myself sincere satisfaction.

Yours truly,
WILLIAM DAY.

Marah finished reading, and raised her eyes, full of amazement, to the face of her son.

"Mother!" said Traverser, speaking fast and eagerly, "they say they really cannot do without you. They have troops of servants, but the old cock is in her dotage and does all sorts of strange things—such as frying buck-wheat cakes in lamp-oil and the like."

"Oh, hush! what exaggeration!"
"Well, I don't say she does *that* exactly, but she isn't equal to her situation, without a housekeeper to look after her; and they want you very much indeed."

"And what is to become of *your* home, if I break up?" suggested the mother.
"Oh, that is the very best of it! the doctor says if you consent to come, that I must also live there, and that then he can have his medical assistant always at hand, which will be very convenient."

Marah smiled dubiously.
"I do not understand it; but one thing I do know, Traverser: there is not such a man as the doctor appears in this world more than once in a hundred years."

"Not in a thousand years, mother! and as for his daughter—oh, you should see Miss Clara, mother! Her father calls her Clara—Clara Day

—how the name suits her! She is so fair and bright! with such a warm, thoughtful, sunny smile that goes right to your heart! Her face is indeed like a clear day, and her beautiful smile is the sunshine that lights it up!" said the enthusiastic youth, whose admiration was as yet too simple and single-hearted and unselfish to tie his tongue.

The mother smiled at his earnestness—smiled without the least misgiving; for to her apprehension the youth was still a boy, to wonder at and admire beauty without being in the least danger of having his peace of mind disturbed by love. And as yet her idea of him was just.

"And, mother, of course you will go," said Traverse.

"Oh, I do not know. The proposition was so sudden and unexpected, and is so serious and important that I must take time to reflect," said Mrs. Rooke, thoughtfully.

"How much time, mother? Will until tomorrow morning do? It must, little mother, because I promised to carry your youngest back with me. Indeed I did mother!" exclaimed the impatient boy.

Mrs. Rooke dropped her head upon her hand, as was her custom when in deep thought. Presently she said:

"Trav, I'm afraid this is not a genuine offer of a situation of house-keeper. I'm afraid that it is only a ruse to cover a scheme of benevolence, and that they don't really want me, and I should only be in their way."

"Now, mother, I do assure you, they *do* want you! I think of that young girl and elderly gentleman—can either of *them* take charge of a large establishment like that of Willow Heights?"

"Well argued, Traverse; but granting that they need a housekeeper, how do I know that I would suit them?"

"Why may you take their own words for that, mother?"

"But how can they know? I am afraid they would be disappointed."

"Wait until they complain, mother."

"I don't believe they ever would."

"I don't believe they ever would have cause."

"Well, granting also that I should suit them."

The mother paused and sighed. Traverse filled up the blank by saying:

"I suppose you mean if you *should* suit them, they might not suit you."

"No, I do not mean that! I am *sure* they would suit me! but there is *one* in the world, who may one day come to reason and take bitter umbrage at the fact that I should accept a subordinate situation in any household," murmured Mrs. Rooke, almost unconsciously.

"Then that 'one in the world,' whoever he, she, or it may be, had better place you above the necessity, or else hold his, her, or it's tongue!—Mother I think that gods thrown in our way by Providence had better be accepted, leaving the consequences to him!"

"Traverse, dear, I shall pray over this matter to-night, and sleep on it; and He to whom even the fall of a sparrow is not indifferent will guide me," said Mrs. Rooke; and here the debate ended.

The remainder of the evening was spent in laudation of Clara Day, and in writing a letter to Herbert Greyson, at West Point, in which all these laudations were reiterated, and in course of which Traverse wrote these innocent words—"I have known Clara Day scarcely twelve hours, and I admire her as much as I love my own oh, Herbert! if you could only rise to be a major general and marry Clara Day, I should be the happiest fellow alive!" Would Traverse as willingly dispose of Clara's hand a year or two after this time? I trow not!

The next morning after breakfast Mrs. Rooke gave in her decision.

"Tell the doctor, Traverse," she said, "that I understand and appreciate his kindness; that I will not break up my humble abode as yet; but I will look up my house and come a month, on trial; if I can perform the duties of the situation satisfactorily, well and good! I will remain; if not why then, having my home still in possession, I can return to it."

"Wise little mother! she will not cut down the bridge behind her!" exclaimed Traverse, joyfully, as he bade his mother good-bye for the day, and

hastened up to Willow Heights with her answer. This answer was received by the good doctor and his lovely daughter with delight as unfeigned as it was unselfish. They were pleased to have a good house-keeper; but they were far better pleased to offer a poor struggling mother a comfortable and even luxurious home.

On the next Monday morning, Mrs. Rooke having completed all her arrangements, and closed up her home, entered upon the duties of her new situation.

Clara gave her a large and airy bed-chamber for her own use, communicating with a smaller one for the use of her son; besides this, as house-keeper, she had of course the freedom of the whole house.

Traverse watched with anxious vigilance to find out whether the efforts of his mother really improved the condition of the house-keeper, and was delighted to find that the coffee was clearer and finer flavored; the bread whiter and lighter; the cream richer, the butter fresher, and the beef-steak juicier than he had ever known them to be from the doctor's table; that on the dinner-table, from day to day, dishes succeeded each other in a well-ordered variety and well-defined style—in a word, that in every particular, the comfort of the family was greatly enhanced by the presence of the housekeeper, and that the doctor and his daughter knew it.

While the doctor and the student were engaged in the library, Clara spent many hours of the morning in Mrs. Rooke's company learning the arts of domestic economy and considerably assisting her in the preparation of delicate dishes.

In the evening the doctor, Clara, Mrs. Rooke, and Traverse gathered around the fire as one family. Mrs. Rooke and Clara engaged in needle-work, and the doctor or Traverse in reading aloud, for their amusement, some agreeable book. Sometimes Clara would richly entertain them with music—singing and accompanying herself upon the piano.

An hour before bedtime the servants were always called in, and general family prayer offered up.

Thus passed the quiet, pleasant profitable days. Traverse was fast falling into a delicious dream, from which, as yet, no rude shock threatened to awake him. Willow Heights seemed to him Paradise, its inmates angels—and his own life—beatitude!

CHAPTER XX.

THE OUTLAW'S RENDEZVOUS.

Our plots fall short like darts which rash hands throw
With an ill aim, and have too far to go;
Nor can we long discoveries prevent
God is too much about the innocent!

SIR ROBERT HOWARD.

"The Old Road Inn," described in the dying deposition of poor Nancy Grenwell, was situated some miles from Hurricane Hall, by the side of a forsaken turn-pike in the midst of a thickly wooded, long and narrow valley, shut in by two lofty ranges of mountains.

Once this turnpike was lively with travel and this inn gay with custom; but for the last twenty-five years, since the highway had been turned off in another direction, both road and tavern had been abandoned, and suffered to fall to ruin. The road was washed and furrowed into deep and dangerous gullies, and obstructed by fallen timber; the house was disfigured by mouldering walls, broken chimneys and patched windows.

Had any traveller lost himself, and chanced to have passed that way, he might have seen a little, old, dried-up woman, sitting knitting at one of the windows. She was known by those who were old enough to remember her and her home, as Granny Raven, the daughter of the last proprietor of the inn. She was reputed to be dumb, but none could speak with certainty of the fact. In truth, for as far back as the memory of the "oldest inhabitant" could reach, she had been feared, disliked and avoided, as one of malignant reputation; indeed, the ignorant and superstitious believed her to possess the "evil eye," and to be gifted with "second sight."

But of late years as the old road and the old inn were quite forsaken, so the belated was quite forgotten.

It was one evening, a few weeks after Capita's

fearful adventure in the forest, that this old woman carefully closed up every door and window in the front of the house, stopping every crevice through which a ray of light might gleam and turn that impossible phenomenon—a chance traveller, on the old road, of life within the habitation.

Having, so to speak, hermetically sealed the front of the house, she betook herself to a large back kitchen.

This kitchen was strangely and rudely furnished—having an extra broad fire place with the recesses on each side of the chimney filled with oaken shelves, laden with strong pewter plates, dishes and mugs; all along the walls were arranged rude, oaken benches; down the length of the room, was left, always standing, a long deal table, capable of accommodating from fifteen to twenty guests.

On entering this kitchen, Granny Raven struck a light, kindled a fire, and began to prepare a large supper.

Nor unlike the ill-omened bird whose name she bore did this old belated look in her close clinging black gown, and flapping black cape and hood, and with her sharp eyes, hooked nose and protruding chin.

Having put a large skilkin of beef before the fire, she took down a pile of pewter plates and arranged them along the sides of the table; then to every plate she placed a pewter mug. A huge wheaten loaf of bread, a great roll of butter and several plates of pickles were next put upon the board, and when all was ready the old woman sat down to the patient turning of the spit.

She had not been thus occupied more than twenty minutes when a hasty, scuffling step was heard at the back of the house accompanied by a peculiar whistle, immediately under the window.

"That's 'Headlong Hal,' for a penny! He never can learn the cat's tread!" thought the crone, as she arose and withdrew the bolt of the back door.

A little dark-skinned, black-eyed, black-haired, thin and wiry man came hurrying in, exclaiming:

"How now, old gal,—supper ready?"

She shook her head, pointed to the roasting beef, lifting up two hands with the ten fingers spread out twice, and then made a rotary motion with one arm.

"Oh—you mean it will be done in twenty turns; but hang me if I understand your dumb show half the time.—Have none of the men come yet?"

She put her fingers together, fang her hands widely apart in all directions, brought them slowly together again, and pointed to the supper table.

"Um!—that is to say they are dispersed about their business, but will all be here to-night?" She nodded.

"Where's the cap'n?"

She pointed over her left shoulder upwards—placed her two hands out broad from her temples—then made a motion as of lifting and carrying a basket, and displaying goods.

"Humph! humph! gone to Tip-Top to sell goods disguised as a peddler!"

She nodded. And before he could put another question, a low, soft *new* was heard at the door.

"There's the Sleazy Steve!"—he might walk with hob-nailed high-tops over a gravelly road, and you would never hear of his footfall," said the man, as the door noiselessly opened and shut, a soft-footed, low-voiced, subtle looking mulatto entered the kitchen, and gave good evening to its occupants.

"Ha! I'm devilish glad you've come, Steve, for hang me if I'm not tired to death trying to talk to this crone, who, to the charms of old age and ugliness, adds that of dumbness. Seen the cap'n?"

"No, he's gone out to hear the people talk, and find out what they think of him."

Hal burst into a loud and scornful laugh, saying:—"I should think it would not require much seeking to discover!"

Here the old woman came forward, and, by signs, managed to inquire whether he had brought her "the tea."

Steve drew a packet from his pocket, saying softly:

"Yes, mother, when I was in Spicer's store I

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the forest, that this old woman every door and window in the chimney filled with strong power plates, along the walls were arranged down the length of the standing, a long deal table, when from fifteen to twenty

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saw this lying with other things on the counter, and remembering you, quietly put it into my pocket."

The old crooner's eyes danced; she seized the packet, patted the excellent thief on the shoulder, waved her head derisively at the delinquent one, and hobbled off to prepare her favourite beverage.

While she was thus occupied the whistle was entrance of a man, decidedly the most repulsive-looking of the whole party—a man one having a full pocket would scarcely like to meet on a long road in a dark night. In form he was of Dutch proportions, short but stout; with a large, round head covered with stiff, sandy hair, broad, flat face; coarse features, pale, half-closed eyes, and an expression of countenance strangely made up of elements as opposite as they were forbidding—a mixture of stupidity and surliness, cowardice and ferocity, caution and cruelty. His name in the gang was Demon Duck, a sobriquet of which he was eminently deserving and characteristically proud.

He came in sulkily, neither saluting the company nor returning their salutations. He pulled a chair to the fire, threw himself into it, and ordered the old woman to draw him a mug of ale.

"Dick is a bad humor to-night," murmured Steve, softly.

"When was he ever in a good one?" roughly broke forth Hal.

"H—sh!" said Steve, glancing at Dick, who, with a malicious expression, was listening to the conversation.

"There's the cap'n!" exclaimed Hal, as a ringing footstep sounded outside, followed by the abrupt opening of the door and entrance of the leader.

Setting down a large basket, and throwing off a broad-brimmed Quaker hat and broad-skirted overcoat, Black Donald stood roaring with laughter.

Black Donald, from his great stature, might have been a giant walked out of the age of fable into the middle of the nineteenth century. From his stature alone he might have been chosen leader of this band of desperadoes. He stood six feet eight inches in his boots, and was stout and muscular in proportion. He had a well-formed, stately head, fine aquiline features, dark complexion, strong, steady, dark eyes, and an abundance of long curly black hair and beard that would have driven to despair a Broadway beau, broken the heart of a Washington belle, or made his own fortune in any city of America as a French count or a German baron! He had deviously the air of a noble and distinguished.

While he threw his broad arm in one direction and his broad coat in another, and gave way to peals of laughter, Headlong Hal, said:

"Cap'n, I don't know what you think of it; but I think it just as churlish to laugh alone as to get drunk in solitude."

"Oh, you shall laugh! you shall all laugh! Wait until I tell you! But first, answer me: Does not my broad-skirted gray coat and broad-brimmed hat make me look about twelve inches shorter and broader?"

"That's so, Cap'n!"

"And when I lay my black beard and chin deep down in this drab neckcloth, and pull the broad brim low over my black hair and eyes, I look as mild and respectable as William Penn."

"Yea, verily, friend Donald," said Hal.

"Well, in this meek guise I went peddling to-day."

"Aye, Cap'n, we knew it; and you'll go once too often."

"I have gone just once too often."

"I knew it."

"We said so."

"—N!" were some of the ejaculations as the members of the band sprang to their feet and huddled round him.

"Pshaw! put up your knives and pistols! There is no danger; I was not traced; our rendezvous is still a secret for which the government would pay a thousand dollars!"

"How, then, do you say that you went once too often, Cap'n?"

"It was inaccurate. I should have said that I had gone for the last time, for that it would not be safe to venture again. Come—I must tell you the whole story,—but in the meantime let us have supper. Mother Haven, dish the beef,

Dick, draw the ale. Hal, cut the bread. Steve, carve. Bestir yourselves, burn you! or you shall have no story!" exclaimed the captain, flinging himself into a chair at the head of the table.

When his orders had been obeyed, and the men were gathered round the table, and the first draught of ale had been quaffed by all, Black Donald asked:

"Where do you think I went peddling to-day?"

"Devil knows," said Hal.

"That's a secret between the Demon and Black Donald," said Dick.

"Hush! he's about to tell us," murmured Steve.

"Wooden heads! you'd never guess. I went—I went to—Do you give it up? I went right straight into the lion's jaws—not only into the very clutches, but into the very teeth, and down the very throat of the lion! and have come out as safe as Jonas from the whale's belly!—in a word, I have been up to the county seat where the court is now in session, and sold cigar-cases, snuff-boxes and smoking caps to the grand and petty jury, and a pair of gold spectacles to the learned judge himself!"

"No!"

"No!" exclaimed Hal, Steve and Dick in a breath.

"Yea! and moreover, I offered a pair of patent steel spring handcuffs to the sheriff, John Keene, in person, and pressed him to purchase for their use if ever he caught that grand rascal, Black Donald!"

"Ah! the atrocious villain, if I thought I should ever have the satisfaction of springing them upon his wrists, I'd buy them at my own proper cost," said the sheriff, taking them in his hands, and examining them curiously.

"Ah! he's a man of Bellai, that same Black Donald!—they'd better buy the handcuffs, John."

"Nay, friend, I don't know; and as for Black Donald, we have some hopes of taking the wretch at last!" said the simple gentleman.

"Ah, verily, John, that's a good hearing for peaceful travellers like myself, said I."

"Excellent! excellent! for when that fell marauder once swings from a gallows—"

"His neck will be broken, John!"

"Yea, friend; yea, probably; after which honest man may travel in safety. Ah! I never have I adjudged a blemish cravat about the throat of any aspirant for such an honor, with less pan than I shall officiate at the last toilet of Black Donald!"

"If they catch him!"

"Exactly, friend, if I catch him; but the additional reward offered by Major Warfield, together with the report that he often frequents our towns and villages in disguise, will stimulate people to renewed efforts to discover and capture him," said the sheriff.

"Ah! that will be a great day for Allegheny And when Black Donald is hanged, I shall make an effort to be present at the solemnity myself!"

"Do, friend," said the sheriff, "and I will see to getting you a good place for witnessing the proceedings."

"I have no doubt thee will, John—a very good place! I assure thee that there will not be one present more interested in those proceedings."

"Of course, that is very natural; for there is no one more in danger from these miscreants than men of your itinerant calling. Good heavens! it was but three years ago a peddler was robbed and murdered in the woods around the Hidden House."

That often when I've been travelling along the road at night Black Donald hasn't been far off! But tell me, John, so that I may have a chance of earning that thousand dollars—what disguises does this son of Moloch take?"

"Why, friend, it is said that he appears as a Methodist missionary, going about selling tracts; and sometimes as a knife-grinder, and sometimes simulates your calling, as a peddler! said the unsuspicious sheriff."

"I thought, however, it was time to be off, so I said 'thee had better let me sell thee those handcuffs, John. Allow me! I will show thee their use!'"

"Hold out thy wrists, if thee please, John."

"The unassuming officer, with a face brimful of interest, held out his wrists for experiment."

"I snapped the ornaments on them in a little less than no time, and took up my pack and disappeared before the sheriff had collected his faculties and found out his position."

"Ha, ha, ha! haw, haw! ho, ho, ho!" laughed the outlaws, in every key of laughter—"and so our captain, instead of being pinioned by the sheriff, turned the tables and actually manacled his honor! H—hip, hurrah! three times three for the mer—tain, that manacled the sheriff!"

"Hush, burn you! there's some one coming!" exclaimed the captain, rising and listening.

It is Le Noir, who was to meet us here to-night on important business."

CHAPTER XXI.

GABRIEL LE NOIR.

Naught's had! all's spent! When our desires are gained without content. SHAKESPEARE.

"The colonel!" exclaimed the three men in a breath, as the door opened and a tall, handsome and distinguished-looking gentleman, wrapped in a black military coat, and having his black beaver pulled low over his brow, strode into the room.

All arose upon their feet to greet him as though he had been a prince.

With a haughty wave of his hand, he bade them resume their seats, and beckoning their leader, said:

"Donald, I would have a word with you."

"At your command, Colonel," said the outlaw, rising and taking a candle and leading the way into the adjoining room, the same in which fourteen years before old Granny Grewell and the child had been detained.

Setting the candle upon the mantelpiece, Black Donald stood waiting for the visitor to open the conversation, a thing that the latter seemed in no hurry to do, for he began walking up and down the room in sterner silence.

"You seem disturbed, Colonel," at length said the outlaw.

"I am disturbed—more than disturbed! I am suffering!"

"Suffering, Colonel?"

"Aye!—suffering!—from what, think you?—the pangs of remorse!"

"Remorse! ha ha ha ha ha!" laughed the outlaw, till all the rafters rang.

"Aye, man, you may laugh but I repeat (that I am tortured with remorse)—and for what do you suppose?—for those acts of self preservation that fanatics and fools would stigmatize as crimes? No, my good fellow, but for one 'unacted crime!'"

"I told your honor so!" cried the outlaw, tri-umphant.

"Donald, when I go to church, as I do constantly, I hear the preacher, prating of repentance; but, man, I never knew the meaning of the word until recently!"

"And I can almost guess what it is that has enlightened your honor!" said the outlaw.

"Yea! it is that miserable old woman and babe! Donald, in every vein of my soul, I repent not having silenced them both forever while they were yet in my power!"

"Just so, Colonel; the dead never come back; or, if they do, are not recognized as property-holders in this world! I wish your honor had taken my advice, and sent that woman and child on a longer journey."

"Donald—I was younger then than now. I—think from bloodshed," said the man, in a husky voice.

"Bah! superstition. Bloodshed—blood is shed every day! 'We kill to live,' say the butchers. So do we. Every creature preys upon some other creature weaker than himself—the big beasts eat up the little ones; artful men live on the simple; so be it! the world was made for the strong and cunning; let the weak and foolish look to themselves!"

While he spoke, the visitor resumed his rapid, restless striding up and down the room. Presently he came again to the side of the robber, and whispered:

"Donald, that girl has returned to the neighborhood, brought back by old Warfield. My son met her in the woods a month ago, fell into conversation with her—heard her history, or as much of it as she herself knows. Her name is Capitola, she is the living image of her mother. How she came under the notice of old Warfield—to what extent he is acquainted with her birth and rights—not. All that I have discovered after the strictest inquiry that I was enabled to make, is this: that the old beggar-woman that died and was buried at Major Warfield's expense, was no other than Nancy Grewell, returned—that the night before she died she sent for Major Warfield, and had a long talk with him, and that shortly afterwards the old scoundrel travelled to the North and brought home this girl."

"Humph! it is an ugly business, your honor, especially with your honor's little prejudice against—"

"Donald! this is no time for weakness! I have gone too far to stop—*Capitola must die.*"

"That's so Colonel: the pity is that it wasn't found out fourteen years ago. It is so much easier to pinch a baby's nose until it falls asleep, than to smother a young girl's shrieks and cries; then the baby would not have been missed; but the young girl will be sure to be inquired after."

"I know that there will be additional risk; but there shall be the larger compensation, larger than your most sanguine hopes would suggest. Donald, listen!—the day that you bring me out a desirable proof that Capitola Le Noir is dead you finger one thousand dollars!"

"Ha-ha-ha!" laughed the outlaw, in angry scorn—"Capitola Le Noir is the sole heiress of a fortune—in land, negroes, coal-mines, iron-foundries, railway shares and bank stock, of half a million of dollars—and you ask me to get her out of your way for a thousand dollars! I'll do it! you know I will! ha-ha-ha!"

"Why, the government doesn't value your whole carcass at more than I offer you for the temporary use of your hands, you villain!" frowned the colonel.

"No ill names, your honor! Between us they are like kicking guns—apt to recoil!"

"You forget that you are in my power." "I remember that your honor is in mine! Ha-ha-ha! The old Black Donald stands at the bar, the honorable Colonel Le Noir will probably be beside him."

"Enough of this! Confound you, do you take me for one of your pals?"

"No, your worship! My pals are too poor to hire their work done; but then they are brave enough to do it themselves."

"Enough of this, I say! name the price of this new service!"

"Ten thousand dollars—five thousand in advance—the remainder when the deed is accomplished."

"Extortioner!—shameless, ruthless, extortioner!"

"Your honor will fall into that vulgar habit of calling ill names!—it isn't worth while; it doesn't pay. If your honor doesn't like my terms, you needn't employ me; what is certain is that I cannot work for less."

"You take advantage of my necessities."

"Not at all; but the truth is, Colonel, that I am tired of this sort of life, and wish to retire from active business. Besides every man has his ambition, and I have mine. I wish to emigrate to the glorious West, settle, marry, turn my attention to politics, be elected to Congress, then to the Senate, then to the Cabinet, then to the White House; for success in which career, I flatter myself nature and education have especially fitted me. Ten thousand dollars will give me a fair start. Many a successful politician, your honor knows, has started on less character and less capital!"

"To this impudent slander the colonel made no answer; with his arms folded, and his head bowed upon his chest, he walked moodily up and down the length of the apartment; then muttering "Why should I hesitate?" he came to the side of the outlaw, and said:

"I agree to your terms; accomplish the work, and the sum shall be yours. Meet me here on to-morrow evening to receive the earnest-money. In the meantime, in order to make sure of the

girl's identity, it will be necessary for you to go sight of her beforehand at her home, if possible; find out her habits and her haunts—where she walks or rides—when she is most likely to be alone, and so on. Be very careful! A mistake might be fatal."

"Your honor may trust me."

"And now good-bye; remember, to-morrow evening," said the colonel, as, wrapping himself closely in his dark cloak, and pushing his hat low over his eyes, he passed out by the back passage-door, and left the house."

"Ha-ha-ha! Why does that man think it needful to look so villainous? If I were to go about in such a bandit-like dress as that, every child I met would take me for—what I am," laughed Black Donald, returning to his comrades.

During the next hour other members of the band dropped in, until some twenty men were collected together in the large kitchen around the long table, where the remainder of the night was spent in revelry.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE SMUGGLER AND CAPITOLA.

Come buy of me! come buy of me! come buy!
Buy, lady, or else the ladies cry;
I have lavers as white as snow;
I have lavers as black as a crow;
Gloves as sweet as daisies roses;
Veils for faces; masks for noses;
Pins and needles made of steel;
All you need from head to heel!

SHAKESPEARE.

"If I am not allowed to walk or ride out alone I shall 'gang draft.' I know I shall. Was ever such a dill lonesome, hum-drum place as this same Hurricane Hall?" complained Cap, as she sat sewing with Mrs. Condiment in the housekeeper's room.

"You don't like this quiet country life?" inquired Mrs. Condiment.

"No; no better than I do a quiet country grave-yard. I don't want to return to dust before my time, I tell you," said Cap, yawning dismally over her work.

"I HEAR YOU YAWN!" roared the voice of Old Hurricane, who presently came storming in and saying:

"If you want a ride, go and get ready quickly, and come with me; I am going down to the water-mill, please the Lord, to warn Hopkins off the premises, worthless villain! had my grain there since yesterday morning, and hasn't sent it home yet! shan't stay in my mill another month. The girl did not need a second bidding, but flew to prepare herself, while the old man ordered the horses."

In ten minutes more Capitola and Major Warfield cantered away.

They had been gone about two hours, and it was almost time to expect their return, and Mrs. Condiment had just given orders for the tea-table to be set, when Wool came into her room and said there was a sailor at the hall-door, with some beautiful foreign goods, which he wished to show to the ladies of the house."

A sailor, Wool, a sailor with foreign goods for sale? I am very much afraid he's one of those smugglers I've heard tell of; and I'm not sure about the right of buying from smugglers! However, I suppose there's nothing in looking at his goods. You may call him in, Wool," said the old lady, tampering with temptation.

"He *do* look like a smuggler, dat's a fact," said Wool, whose ideas of the small craft were purely imaginary.

"I don't know him to be a smuggler, and it's wrong to judge, particularly behindhand," said the old lady, nursing ideas of rich silks and satins imported free of duty, and sold at half price, and trying to deceive herself.

While she was thus thinking, the door opened, and Wool ushered in a stout, jolly-looking tar, tarpauling hat, and carrying in his hand a large pack. He took of his hat and bowed before the old lady, and remained standing before his foot housekeeper, with his head tied up in a red bandanna handkerchief, and his chin sunken in a red comforter that was wound around his throat.

"Sit down, my good man, and rest while you

show me the goods," said Mrs. Condiment, who, whether he were smuggler or not, was inclined to show the traveller all lawful kindness.

The sailor scraped his foot again, sat down on a low chair, put his hat on one side, drew the pack before him, untied it, and first displayed a rich, golden-braided fabric, saying:

"Now, here, ma'am, is a rich China silk, I bought in the streets of Shanghai, where the long-legged chickens come from; come, now, I'll slip it off cheap—"

"Oh, that is a great deal too gay and handsome for an old woman like me," said Mrs. Condiment.

"We'll make 'em, perhaps there's young ladies in the fleet? Now this would rig out a smart young craft as gay as a clipper! Better take it, ma'am. I'll ship it off cheap."

"Wool," said Mrs. Condiment, turning to the servant, "go down to the kitchen and call up the house-servants; perhaps they would like to buy something."

As soon as Wool had gone, and the good woman was left alone with the sailor, she stooped and said:

"I did not wish to enquire before the servant-man, but my good sir, I do not know whether it is right to buy from you."

"Why so, ma'am?" asked the sailor, with an injured look.

"Why, I am afraid—I am very much afraid you risk your life and liberty in an unlawful trade."

"Oh, ma'am, on my soul these things are honestly come by, and you have no right to accuse me!" said the sailor, with a look of subdued indignation.

"I know I haven't, and meant no harm; but did these goods pass through the custom-house?"

"Oh, ma'am, now, that's not a fair question!"

"It is as I suspected. I cannot buy from you, my good friend; I do not judge you; I don't know that it is unlawful; is right or wrong; but I know that it is unlawful. I cannot feel free to encourage any man in a traffic in which he risks his life and liberty, poor fellow!"

"Oh, ma'am," said the sailor, evidently on the brink of bursting into laughter—"if we risk our lives, sure it's our own business, and if you've no scruples for your own account, you needn't have any on *ours*."

While he was speaking the sound of many shuffling feet was heard along the passage, and the room was soon half filled with colored people come in to deal with the sailor.

"You may look at these goods; but you must not buy anything."

"Lor, missus, why?" asked Little Pitpat.

"Because I want you to lay out all your money with my friend Mr. Crash, at Tip-Top."

"But after do good gemman has had de trouble?" said Pitpat.

"He shall have his supper and a mug of ale and go on his journey," said Mrs. Condiment.

The sailor arose and scraped his foot behind him in acknowledgment of this kindness, and began to unpack his wares and display them all over the floor.

And while the servants in wonder and delight examined these treasures and inquired their prices, a fresh, young voice was heard carolling along the hall, "The next moment Capitola, in her green riding habit and hat, entered the room."

She turned her mischievous gray eyes about, pursed up her lips, and asked Mrs. Condiment if she were about to open a penny bazaar.

"No, my dear Miss Capitola. It is a sailor with foreign goods for sale," answered the old lady.

"A sailor with foreign goods for sale! umph! yes! I know. Isn't he a smuggler?" whispered Capitola.

"Indeed, I'm afraid so, my dear! In fact he don't deny it," whispered back the mastron.

"Well, I think it's strange a man that smuggles can't lie!"

"Well, I don't know, my dear; maybe he thinks it's no harm to smuggle, and he *knows* it would be a sin to lie. But where is your uncle, Miss Capitola?"

"Come around to the stable to blow Jim up, for mounting on a lame horse; he swears Jim shall find another man before to-morrow's sunsets. But now I want to talk to that bold buccaneer."

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la," said Mrs. Condiment, who, smuggler or not, was inclined to all lawful kindness. She looked at her foot again, laid down on the hat on one side, drew the article out, and first displayed a bundle, saying:

"This, ma'am, is a rich China silk, I came from Shanghai, where the long-stems from; come, now, I'll slip

great deal too gay and handsome like me," said Mrs. Condiment, perhaps there's young ladies in a would rig out a smart young upper! Better take it, ma'am.

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my dear! In fact he black the matron.

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Ray you sir! Show me your foreign goods; I'm very fond of smugglers myself!"

"You are right, my dear young lady! You would give poor sailors some little chance to turn an honest penny."

"Certainly! brave fellows! Show me that splendid fabric that shines like cloth of gold."

"This, my young lady, is a real, genuine China silk; I bought it myself in my last cruise, in the streets of Shanghai, where the long-legged chickens—"

"And fast young men come from! I know the place. I've been all along there!" interrupted Capitola, her gray eyes glittering with mischief.

"This, you will perceive, young lady, is an article that cannot be purchased anywhere except—"

"From the manufactory of foreign goods in the city of New York, or from their travelling agents."

"Oh, my dear young lady, how you wrong me! This article came from—"

"The factory of Messrs. Houns & Poens, corner of Canal and Come-it street, city of Gotham!"

"Oh, my dear young lady—"

"Look here, my brave buccaneer, I know all about it. I told you I'd been along there!" said the girl; and turning to Mrs. Condiment, she said:

"See here, my dear, good soul, if you want to buy that 'India' silk that you are looking at so longingly, you may do so with a safe conscience. True, it never passed through the custom-house—because it was made in New York. I know all about it! All these 'foreign goods' are manufactured at the north and sent by agents all over the country. These agents dress and talk like sailors, and assume a mysterious manner on purpose to be suspected of smuggling—because they

now well enough these fine ladies will buy quicker and pay much more, if they only fancy they are cheating Uncle Sam, in buying foreign goods from a smuggler at half price!"

"So, then, you are not a smuggler after all!" said Mrs. Condiment, looking almost regretfully at the sailor.

"Why, ma'am, you know I told you you were accusing me wrongfully."

"Well, but really, now, there was something about you that looked sort of suspicious."

"What did I tell you? I look put on purpose," said Cap.

"Well—he knows that if he wanted to pass for a smuggler, it didn't take *here*," said Mrs. Condiment.

"No—that it didn't!" muttered the object of these commentaries.

"Well, my good man, since you are, after all, an honest peddler, just hand me that silk, and don't ask me an unreasonable price for it, because I'm a judge of silks, and I won't pay more than it is worth," said the old lady.

"Madam, I leave it to your own conscience. You shall give me just what you think it's worth."

"Humph! that's too fair by half. I begin to think this fellow is worse than he seems!" said Capitola to herself.

After a little hesitation a price was agreed upon, and the dress bought.

Then the servants received permission to invest their little change in ribbons, handkerchiefs, of the bacco, snuff, or whatever they thought they needed. When the purchases were all made, and the peddler had done up his diminished pack and replaced his hat upon his head and was preparing to leave, Mrs. Condiment said:

"My good man, it is getting very late, and we do not like to see a traveller leave our house at this hour; pray remain until morning, and then, after an early breakfast, you can pursue your way in safety."

"Thank you, kindly, ma'am, but I must be far on my road to-night," said the peddler.

"But, my good man, you are a stranger in this part of the country, and don't know the danger you run," said the housekeeper.

"Danger, ma'am, in this quiet country!"

"Oh, dear, yes, my good man, particularly with your valuable pack—oh, my good gracious!" cried the old lady, with an appalled look.

"Indeed, ma'am, you—"

"Easy! What danger can there be for a poor, peaceful peddler pursuing his path?"

"Oh, my good soul, may heaven keep you from—BLACK DONALD!"

"Black Donald—who's he?"

"Oh, my good man, he's the awfulest villain that ever went unhang!"

"Black Donald! Black Donald! I never heard that name before in my life! Why is the fellow called *Black Donald*?"

"Oh, sir, he's called Black Donald for his black soul, black deeds and—and—also, I believe, for his jet black hair and beard."

"Oh, my countrymen, what a falling *up* was there!" exclaimed Capitola, at this anti-climax.

"And how shall I keep from meeting this villain?" asked the peddler.

"Oh, sir, how can I tell you? You never can form an idea where he is or where he isn't! Only think, he may be in our very midst any time, and we not know it. Why, only yesterday the desperate villain handcuffed the very sheriff in the very courtyard! Yet I wonder the thief did not know him at once! For my own part, I'm sure I should know Black Donald the minute I clapped my two looking eyes on him!"

"Should you, ma'am?"

"Yes, indeed, by his long, black hair and beard! They say it is a half a yard long. Now a man of such a singular appearance as that must be easily recognized!"

"Of course! Then you never met this wretch face to face?"

"Met me! am I standing here alive? Do you suppose I should be standing here if ever I had met that demon? Why, man, I never with the devil, even in the day-time, except from two sailors and a servant, for fear I should meet Black Donald! I know if ever I should meet that demon, I should drop dead with terror. I feel I should!"

"But maybe, now, ma'am, the man may not be so bad, after all. Even the devil is not so black as he is painted."

"The devil may not be, but Black Donald is."

"What do you think of this Black Donald, young lady?" asked the peddler, turning to Capitola.

"Why, I like him!" said Cap.

"You do?"

"Yes, I do! I like men whose very names strike terror into the hearts of commonplace people!"

"Oh, Miss Black!" exclaimed Mrs. Condiment.

"Yes, I do, ma'am. And if Black Donald were only as honest as he is brave, I should quite *adore* him so there! And if there is one person in the world I long to see, it is Black Donald."

"Do you *really* wish to see him?" asked the peddler, looking intently into the half earnest, half satirical face of the girl.

"Yes, I do wish to see him above all things."

"And do you know what happened to the rash girl who wished to see the devil?"

"No—what did?"

"She *saw* him!"

"Oh! if that's all, I dare it," and if wishing will bring me the sight of this man, I wish it. I wish it. I wish to see Black Donald," said Capitola.

The peddler deliberately arose and put down his pack and his hat; then he suddenly tore off from his neck and the handkerchief from his lower lip, and shook loose a great, rolling mass of black hair and beard; drew himself up, struck an attitude, called up a look, and exclaimed:

"Behold Black Donald!"

With a piercing shriek, Mrs. Condiment swooned and fell to the floor; the poor negroes, men and women, were struck dumb and motionless with consternation; Capitola gazed for one lost moment in admiration and curiosity; in the meantime Black Donald quickly resumed his disguises, took up his pack and walked out of the room.

Capitola was the first to recover her presence of mind, and, instinct of the huntress possessed her, starting forward she exclaimed:

"Pursue him! catch him! come with me! Cowards! will you let a robber and murderer escape!" and she ran out and overtook the outlaw in the middle of the hall. With the agile leap of a little ferret she sprang up behind him, seized the collar of his pea-jacket with both hands, and drawing up her feet, hung there with all her weight, crying:

"Help! murder! murder! help! Come to my aid! I've caught Black Donald!"

He could have killed her instantly in any one of a dozen ways! He could have driven in her temples with a blow of his sleigh-bumper; first; he could have broken her neck with the grip of his iron fingers; he only wished to shake her off without hurting her—a difficult task, for there she hung, a dead weight, at the collar of his coat at the back of his neck.

"Oh, very well!" he cried, laughing aloud.

"Such adhesiveness I never saw! You stick to me like a wife to her husband. So, if you won't let go, I shall have to take you along, that's all! So here I go, like Christian with his bundle of sin on his back."

And loosening the upper button of his pea-jacket so as to give him more breath, and putting down his peddler's pack to relieve himself as much as possible, the outlaw strode through the hall, down the steps, and down the evergreen avenue leading to the woods.

Capitola, still clinging to the back of his coat-collar, with her feet drawn up, a dead weight, and still crying:

"Help! murder! I've caught Black Donald, and I'll die before I'll let him go."

"You're determined to be an outlaw's bride, that's certain. Well I've no particular objection," cried Black Donald, roaring with laughter as he strode on.

It was "a thing to see, not hear"—that brave, rash, resolute man clinging to a robber, or a traitor, or a briar, or to the back of the slightest ruffian, whom, if she had no strength to stop, she was determined not to release.

They had nearly reached the foot of the descent, when a great noise and hallooing were heard behind them. It was the negroes, who, having recovered from their panic, and armed themselves with guns, pistols, swords, pokers, tongs, and pitch-forks, were now in hot pursuit.

And cries of "Black Donald!" "Black Donald!" "Black Donald!" filled the air.

"I've got him! I've got him! help! help! quick! quick!" screamed Capitola, clinging closer than ever.

Though still roaring with laughter at the absurdity of his position, Black Donald strode on faster than before, and was in a fair way of escape, when lo! suddenly coming up the path in front of him, he met—

Old Hurricane!!!

As the troop of miscellaneous-armed negroes running down the hill, still making eye "chit-chat" with yells of "Black Donald!" "Black Donald!" and Capitola still clinging and hanging on at the back of his neck, continued to cry:

"I've caught him! I've caught him! help! help!" something like the truth flashed in a blinding way upon old Hurricane's perceptions.

Roaring forth with a recognition and defiance, the old man threw up his fat arms, and as fast as age and obesity would permit ran up the hill to intercept the outlaw.

There was no time for trifling now! The army of negroes were at his heels; the old veteran in his path; the girl clinging a dead weight to his jacket behind. An idea suddenly struck him, which he wondered how he did not see before—quickly unbuttoning and throwing off his garment he dropped both cap and jacket behind him on the ground.

And before Capitola had picked herself up, Black Donald, bending his huge head and shoulders forward and making a battering-ram of himself, ran with all his force and buttled into Hurricane in the stomach, pitched him into the horse-pond, leaped over the park-fence and disappeared in the forest.

What a scene! what a row followed the escape and flight of the famous outlaw!

Who could imagine, far less describe it!—a general tempest in which every individual was a particular storm!

There stood the baffled Capitola, extricating her head from the pea-jacket, and with her eyes fairly flashing out sparks of anger, exclaiming:

"Oh, wretches! wretches that you are! if you'd been worth your *salt* you could have caught him while I clung to him so!"

There followed Old Hurricane, spluttering, floundering, half drowning, in the horse-pond, making the most frantic efforts to curse and swear as he struggled to get out.

There stood the crowd of negroes brought to a sudden stand by a panic of horror at seeing the dignity of their master so outraged.

And most phrenzied of all, there ran Wool around, and around the margin of the pond, in a state of violent perplexity how to get his master out without his drowning himself.

"Blurr-urrrr! *Ca-mish! fitch!* Blurr-urrr! splintered and snarled and strangled Old Hurricane, as he floundered to the edge of the pond. "Blurr-urrrr! Help me out, you scoundrel! I'll break every bone in your—*fitch!*—body! Do you hear me—*ca-mish!*—villain you! *fitch! fitch!* *Ca-mish! fitch!*"

Wool with his eyes starting from his head, and his hair standing up with horrors of all sorts, plunged at last into the water and pulled his old master up upon his feet.

"*Ca-mish! Ca-mish! Blurr-urrr! fitch!*—what are you gaping there for as if you'd raised the devil, you crowd of born fools!" howled Old Hurricane, as soon as he could get the water out of his mouth and nose—"what are you standing there for—after him! after him, I say! Scour the woods in every direction! His freedom to any man who brings me Black Donald, dead or alive!"

"Yes, sir," said that functionary, who was busying himself with squeezing the water out of his master's garments.

"Wool, let me alone! take the fleetest horse in the stable! ride for your life to the Court House! Tell Keesee to have new bills posted everywhere, offering an additional five hundred dollars for the apprehension of that—*that—th—that—*" for the want of a word strong enough to express himself, Old Hurricane suddenly stopped, and for lack of his stick to make sense emphatic, he seized his gray hair with both hands and groaned aloud.

Wool waited no second bidding but flew to do his errand.

Capitola came to the old man's side, saying: "Uncle, hadn't you better hurry home—you'll take cold."

"Cold?—Cold! damn! I never was so hot in my life!" cried the old man; "but damn! you're right! run to the house, Capitola, and tell Mrs. Condiment to have me a full suit of dry clothes before the fire in my chamber. Go, and there is nobody but, and Condiment, and the housemaids to take care of me. Stop! look for my stick first; where did that black demon throw it?—damn! I'd as well be without my legs!"

Capitola picked up the old man's cane and hat, and put the one on his head and the other in his hand, and then hastened to find Mrs. Condiment and tell her to prepare to receive her half-drowned patron. She found the old lady scarcely recovered from the effects of her recent fright, but ready on the instant to make every effort on behalf of Old Hurricane, who presently arrived dripping wet at the house.

Leaving the old gentleman to the care of his housekeeper, we must follow Black Donald.

Hatless and coatless, with his long black hair and beard blown by the wind, the outlaw made tracks for his retreat—occasionally stopping to turn and get breath, and send a shout of laughter at his baffled pursuers.

That same night, at the usual hour, the gang met at their rendezvous, the deserted inn, beside the old road through the forest. They were in the midst of their orgies around the supper-table, when the well-known ringing step of the leader sounded under the back windows without, the door was burst open, and the captain, hatless, coatless, with his dark elf locks flying, and every sign of haste and disorder, rushed into the room.

He was met by a general rising and outcry: "Hi! hillo! what's up?" exclaimed every man, starting to his feet and laying his hand upon secret arms, prepared for instant resistance.

For a moment Black Donald stood with his lionine head turned and looking back over his stalwart shoulders, as if in expectation of pursuit, and then, with a loud laugh, turned to his men, exclaiming:

"Hoi you thought me followed! So I have been! but as close as hound to heel!"

"In fact, Captain, you look as if you'd but escaped with your skin this time!" said Hal.

"Faith! the captain looks well peeled!" said Stephen.

Worse than that, boys! worse than that! Your chief has not only lost his pack, his hat and outworks battered, but the citadel itself is taken! Not only has he been captured, but *captivated!* and all by a little mix of a girl!—Boys, your chief is in love!" exclaimed Black Donald, throwing himself into his seat at the head of the table, and quaffing off a large draught of ale.

"Hi! hi! hurrah! three times three for the Captain's love!" cried Hal, rising to propose the toast, which was honored with enthusiasm.

"Now tell us all about it, Captain. Who is she? where did you see her? is she fair or dark? tall or short? thin or plump? what's her name, and is she kind?" asked Hal.

"First guess where I have been to-day."

"You and your demon only know."

"I guess they also know at Hurricane Hall, for it is there I have been!"

"Well, then, why didn't you go to perdition at once?" exclaimed Hal, in a conternation that was reflected in every countenance present.

"Why, because when I go *there* I intend to take you all with me and remain!" answered Black Donald.

"Tell us about the visit to Hurricane Hall," said Hal.

Whereupon Black Donald commenced, and concealing only the motive of his visit, gave his comrades a very graphic, spicy and highly colored narrative of his adventure at Hurricane Hall, and particularly of his "passages at arms" with the little witch, Capitola, whom he described as:

"*Such a girl!* slender, petite, lithe, with bright, black, ringlets dancing around a little face full of fun, frolic, mischief and spirit, and bright eyes quick and vivacious as those of a monkey, darting hither and thither from object to object."

"The Captain is in love, sure enough," said Steve.

"Bravo! here's success to the Captain's love—*She's a brick!*" shouted the men.

"Oh, she *is*," assented their chief, with enthusiasm.

"Long life to her! three times three for the pretty witch of Hurricane Hall!" roared the men, rising to their feet and raising their full mugs high in the air, before pledging the toast.

"*That* is all very well, boys; but I want more substantial compliments than words—*Boys! I must have that girl!*"

"Who doubts it, Captain?—of course you will take her at once if you want her," said Hal, confidently.

"But, I must have *help* in taking her."

"Captain, I volunteer!" said Steve.

"And I, for another," said Hal.

"And you, Dick?" inquired the leader, turning towards the sullen man, whose greater atrocity had gained for him the name of Demon Dick.

"What is the use of volunteering when the captain has only to *command*!" said this indignant, sulky.

"Ah! when the enterprise is simply the robbing of a mail-coach, in which you all have equal interest, then, indeed, your captain has only to command, and you to obey; but *this* is a more delicate matter of entering a lady's chamber and carrying her off for the captain's arms, and should only be entrusted to those whose feelings of devotion to the captain's person prompt them to volunteer for the service," said Black Donald.

"How elegantly our captain speaks! he ought to be a lawyer," said Steve.

"The captain knows I'm with him for everything," said Dick, sulky.

"Very well, then I for a personal service like this, a delicate service requiring devotion, I should scorn to give *commands*! I thank you for your offered assistance, my friends, and shall count on you three, Hal, Stephen and Richard, for the enterprise," said the captain.

"Ay! ay! ay!" said the three men, in a breath.

"For the time and place and manner of the seizure of the girl, we must reflect. Let us feel there is to be a fair in the village next week, during the session of the court. Old Hurricane will be at court as usual. And for one day, at least, his servants will have a holiday to go to the fair."

They will not get home until the next morning. The house will be ill-guarded. We must find out so. Then you three shall watch your opportunity, enter the house by stealth, conceal yourselves in the chamber of the girl, and at midnight, when all is quiet, gag her and bring her away."

"Excellent!" said Hal.

"And mind, no liberty except the simple act of carrying her off is to be taken with your captain's prime," said the leader, with a threatening glare of his lion-like eyes.

"Oh, no! not for the world! She shall be as sacred from insult as though she were an angel and we saints," said Hal, both the others assenting.

"And now not a word more. We will arrange the further details of this business hereafter," said the captain as a peculiar signal was given at the door.

Waving his hand for the men to keep their places, Black Donald went out and opened the back passage admitting Col. Le Noir.

"Well," said the latter anxiously.

"Well, sir, I have contrived to see her; come into the front room and I will tell you all about it," said the outlaw, leading the way into the old parlor that had been the scene of so many of their conspiracies.

"*Does Capitola Le Noir still live!*" hoarsely demanded the colonel, as the two conspirators reached the parlor.

"Still live? yes; 'twas but yesterday we agreed upon her death. Give a rian time. Sit down, Colonel; take this seat; we will talk the matter over again."

With something very like a sigh of relief, Colonel Le Noir threw himself into the offered chair. Black Donald drew another chair up and sat down beside his patron.

"Well, Colonel, I have contrived to see the girl as I told you," he began.

"But you have not done the deed; when will it be done?"

"Colonel my patron, be patient. Within twelve days I shall claim the last instalment of the ten thousand dollars agreed upon between us for this job."

"But why so long? since it is to be done, why not have it over at once?" said Colonel Le Noir, starting up and pacing the floor impatiently.

"Patience, my Colonel. The cat may play with the mouse most delightfully before devouring it."

"What do you mean?"

"My Colonel, I have seen the girl under circumstances that has fired my heart with an uncontrollable desire for her."

"Black Donald! the mail-robber, burglar, outlaw, the subject of the grand passion!"

"Why not, my Colonel. Listen, you shall hear, and then you shall judge whether or not you yourself might not have been fired by the fascinations of such a witch!" said the outlaw, who straightway commenced and gave his patron the account of his visit to Hurricane Hall that he had already related to his comrades.

The colonel heard the story with many a "fish," "tush" and "shaw," and when the mere had concluded the tale he exclaimed:

"Is that all? Then we may continue our negotiations—care not. Carry her off! marry her! do as you please with her! only at the end of all—*kill her!*" hoarsely whispered Le Noir.

"That is just what I intend, Colonel."

"That will do if the event be certain; but it must be certain. I cannot breathe freely while my *brother's* *beloved* lives!" whispered Le Noir.

"Well, Colonel, be content; here is my hand upon it. In six days Capitola will be in my power. In twelve days you shall be out of *her*."

"It is a bargain," said each of the conspirators in a breath, as they shook hands and parted—Le Noir to his home and Black Donald to join his comrades' revelry.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE BOY'S LOVE.

Endearing! endearing!
Why so endearing
Are those soft shining eyes,
Through their silk fringe peering?
They love thee! they love thee!
Deeply, sincerely
And more than taught else on earth
Thou lovest them dearly!—MOTHERWELL.

While these dark conspiracies were hatching elsewhere, all was comfort, peace and love in the doctor's quiet dwelling.

Under Marah Rocke's administration the business of the household went on with the regularity of clock-work. Every one felt the advantage of this improved condition.

The doctor often declared that for his part he could not for the life of him think how they had ever been able to get along without Mrs. Rocke and Travers.

Clara affirmed that however the past might have been, the mother and son were a present and future necessity to the doctor's comfort and happiness.

The little woman herself gained rapidly both in health and spirits and good looks. Under favorable circumstances, Marah Rocke, even at thirty-six, would have been esteemed a first-class beauty; and even now she was pretty, graceful and attractive to a degree that she herself was far from suspecting.

Traverse advanced rapidly in his studies, to the ardent pursuit of which he was urged by every generous motive that could fire a human bosom: affection for his mother, whose condition he was anxious to elevate; gratitude to his patron, whose great kindness he wished to justify, and admiration for Clara, whose esteem he was ambitious to secure.

He attended his patron in all his professional visits; for the doctor said that actual experimental knowledge formed the most important part of a young medical student's education.

The mornings were usually spent in reading, in the library; the middle of the day in attending the doctor in his professional visits, and the evenings were passed in the drawing-room with the doctor, Clara and Mrs. Rocke. And if the morning's occupation was the evening's relaxation and the day's the most active, the evening's was certainly the most delightful. In the midst of all this peace and prosperity, a malady was creeping upon the boy's heart and brain, that in his simplicity and inexperience he could neither understand nor conquer.

Why was it that these evening fireside meetings with the doctor's lovely daughter, once such unalloyed delight, were now only a keenly pleasing pain? Why did his face burn and his heart beat and his voice falter, when obliged to speak to her? Why could he no longer talk of her to his mother, or write of her to his friend Herbert Greyson? Above all, why had his favorite day-dream of having his dear friends Herbert and Clara married together grown so abhorrent as to sicken his very soul?

Traverse, himself could not have answered these questions. In his ignorance of life he did not know that all his strong, ardent, earnest nature was tending towards the maiden by a power of attraction seated in the deepest principles of being and of destiny.

Clara in her simplicity did not suspect the truth; but tried in every innocent way to enliven the silent boy, and said that he worked too hard, and begged her father not to let him study too much.

Whereupon the doctor would laugh and bid her not be uneasy about Traverse—that the boy was all right and would do very well. Evidently the doctor, with all his knowledge of human nature, did not perceive that his protégé was in process of forming an unadvisable attachment for his daughter and heiress.

Mrs. Rocke, with her woman's tact and mother's forethought saw all. She saw that in the honest heart of her poor boy, unconsciously there was growing up a strong, ardent, earnest passion for the lovely girl with whom he was thrown in such close, intimate, daily association, and who was certainly not indifferent in her feelings towards

him; but whom he might never, never hope to possess.

She saw this daily growing, and trembled for the peace of both. She wondered at the blindness of the doctor who did not see what was so plain to her own vision. Daily she looked to see the eyes of the doctor open and some action taken upon the circumstances; but they did not open to the evil ahead, for the girl and boy! For morning after morning their hands would be together lying up the same vines, or clearing out the same flower bed; day after day at the doctor's orders Travers attended Clara on her rides; night after night their blinding faces would be bent over the same sketch book, chess board, or music sheet.

"Oh! if the doctor can not and will not see, what shall I do? what ought I to do?" said the conscientious woman to herself, dreading above all things, and equally for her son and the doctor's daughter, the evils of an unhappy attachment, which she, with her peculiar temperament and experience believed to be the worst of sorrows, a misfortune never to be conquered or outlived.

"Yes! it is even better that we should leave the house, than that Travers should become hopelessly attached to Clara; or worse than all, that he should repay the doctor's great bounty by winning the heart of his only daughter," said Marah Rocke to herself; and so "screwing her courage to the sticking place" she took an opportunity one morning early while Travers and Clara were out riding, to go into the study to speak to the doctor.

As usual he looked up with a smile to welcome her as she entered; but her downcast eyes and serious face made him uneasy, and he hastened to inquire if she was not well, or if anything had happened to make her anxious, and at the same time he placed a chair, and made her sit in it.

"Yes! I am troubled, Doctor, about a subject that I scarcely know how to break to you," she said, in considerable embarrassment.

"Mrs. Rocke you know I am your friend, anxious to serve you! Trust in me and speak out!" "Well, sir," said Marah, beginning to roll up the corner of her apron, in her embarrassment, "I should not presume to interfere, but you do not see, gentlemen, perhaps, seldom do until it is too late." She paused, and the good doctor turned his head about, listening first with one ear and then with the other, as if he thought by attentive hearing he might come to understand her incomprehensible words.

"Miss Clara has the misfortune to be without a mother, or an aunt, or any lady relative—"

"Oh! yes! I know it, my dear madam, but then I am sure you conscientiously try to fill the place of a maternally friend and adviser to my daughter," said the doctor, striving after light.

"Yes, sir, and it is in view of my duties in this relation that I say—I and Travers ought to go away."

"You and Travers go away!! My good little woman you ought to be more cautious how you shock a man at my time of life! Fifty is a very appreciable age to a full-blooded man, Mrs. Rocke! But now that I have got over the shock, tell me why you fancy that you and Travers ought to go away?"

"Sir, my son is a well-meaning boy—"

"A high-spirited noble-hearted lad!" put in the doctor. "I have never seen a better!"

"But granting all that to be, what I hope and believe it is—*true*, still Travers Rocke is not a proper or desirable daily associate for Miss Day."

"Why?" curiously inquired the doctor.

"If Miss Clara's mother were living, sir, she would probably tell you that young ladies should never associate with any except their *equals* of the opposite sex," said Marah Rocke.

"Clara's dear mother, were she on earth, would understand and sympathize with me, and esteem your Travers as I do, Mrs. Rocke," said the doctor, with moist eyes and a tremulous voice.

"But oh, sir, exceedingly kind as you are to Travers, I dare not, in duty, look on and see things going the way in which they are, and not speak and ask your consent to withdraw Travers!"

"My good little friend," said the doctor, rising and looking kindly and benignantly upon Marah, "My good little woman, sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof!! Suppose you and I trust a little in Divine Providence, and mind our own business?"

"But sir, it seems to me a part of our business to watch over the young and inexperienced, that they fall into no snare."

"And also to treat them with a little wholesome neglect! that our over officiousness may plunge them into none!"

"I wish you would comprehend me, sir!" "I do and applaud your motive; but give your self no further trouble! leave the young people to their own honest hearts and to Providence. Clara, with all her softness, is a sensible girl; and as for Travers, if he is one to break his heart from an unhappy attachment, I have been mistaken in the lad, that is all!" said the doctor, heartily.

Mrs. Rocke sighed, and saying—"I deemed it my duty to speak to you, sir; and having done so I have no more to say," she slightly outstaid and withdrew.

"He does not see! his great benevolence blinds him! In his wish to serve us he exposes Travers to the most dreadful misfortune—the misfortune of becoming hopelessly attached to one far above him in station, whom he can never hope to possess!" said Marah Rocke to herself, as she retired from the room.

"I must speak to Travers himself, and warn him against this snare," she said, as she afterwards ruminated over the subject.

And accordingly that evening, when she had retired to her chamber and heard Travers enter the little adjoining room where he slept, she called him in, and gave him a seat, saying that she must have some serious conversation with him.

The boy looked uneasy, but took the offered chair and waited for his mother to speak.

"Travers," she said, "A change has come over you recently that may escape all other eyes but those of your mother; she, Travers, cannot be blind to anything that seriously affects her boy's happiness."

"Mother! I scarcely know what you mean," said the youth in embarrassment.

"Travers, you are beginning to think too much of Miss Day."

"Oh mother!" exclaimed the boy, while a violent blush overspread and empurpled his face! Then in a little while and in faltering tones he inquired—"Have I betrayed in any way, that I do?"

"To no one but to me, Travers, to me whose anxiety for your happiness makes me watchful; and now, dear boy, you must listen to me; I know it is very sweet to you, to sit in a dark corner and gaze on Clara, when no one, not even herself, witnesses your joy, and to lie awake and think and dream of her when no eye but that of God looks down upon your heart; and to build castles in the air for her and for you; all this I know is very sweet; but, Travers, it is a sweet poison, fatal if indulged in, fatal to your peace and integrity."

"Oh, my mother!—oh, my mother! what are you telling me!" exclaimed Travers, bitterly.

"Unpalatable truths, dear boy, but necessary antidotes to that sweet poison of which you have already tasted too much."

"What would you have me to do, my mother?"

"Guard your acts and words, and even thoughts; forbear to look at, or speak to, or think of Clara, except when it is unavoidable—or if you do, regard her as she is—on, so far beyond your sphere as to be forever unattainable."

"Oh, mother, I never once dreamed of such presumption as to think of—"

"I know you have not indulged presumptuous thoughts; as yet, my boy, and it is to warn you against them, while yet your heart is in some measure within your own keeping, that I speak to you. Indulge your imagination in no more sweet reveries about Miss Day, for the end thereof will be bitter humiliation and disappointment. Remember also that in so doing you would indulge a sort of treachery against your patron, who in his bosom of his family, and admitted you to an almost brotherly intimacy with his daughter. Honor his trust in you, and treat his daughter with the distant respect due to a princess."

"I will, mother. It will be hard, but I will! Oh, an hour ago I did not dream how miserable I should become!" said Travers, in a choking voice.

"Because I have pointed out to you the gulf towards which you were walking blindfold!"

"I know it. I know it now, mother," said Travers, as he arose and pressed his mother's hand and hurried to his own room.

The poor youth did his best to follow out the line of conduct prescribed for him by his mother. He devoted himself to his studies and to the active service of his patron. He avoided Clara as much as possible and, when obliged to be in her company, he treated her with the most respectful reserve.

Clara saw and wondered at his change of manner, and began to cast about in her own mind for the probable cause of his conduct.

"I am the young mistress of the house," said Clara to herself, "and I know I owe to every inmate of it consideration and courtesy; perhaps I may have been unconsciously lacking in these towards Travers, whose situation would naturally render him very sensitive to neglect. I must endeavour to convince him that none was intended." And receiving, Clara redoubled all her efforts to make Travers, as well as others, happy and comfortable.

But happiness and comfort seemed for the time to have departed from the youth. He saw her generous endeavors to cheer him, and while adoring her amiability, grew still more reserved.

This pained the gentle girl, who, taking herself seriously to task, said:

"Oh, I must have deeply wounded his feelings in some unconscious way, and if so, how very cruel and thoughtless of me! how could I have done it? I cannot imagine; but I know I shall not allow him to continue unhappy if I can prevent it. I will speak to him about it."

And then in the candor, innocence and humility of her soul, she followed him to the window where he sat in a moody silence, and said pleasantly:

"Travers, we do not seem to be so good friends as formerly. If I have done anything to offend you, I know that you will believe me when I say that it was quite unintentional on my part and that I am very sorry for it, and hope you will forgive it."

"You, you, Miss Day! you say anything to displease anybody! Any one become displeased with you?" exclaimed the youth, in a tremulous enthusiasm that shook his voice and suffused his cheeks.

"Then if you are not displeased, Travers, what is the matter, and why do you call me Miss Day instead of Clara?"

"Miss Day, because it is right that I should. You are a young lady—the only daughter and heir of Doctor Day of Willow Heights, while, I am—"

"His friend," said Clara.

"The son of his housekeeper," said Travers, walking away.

Clara looked after him in dismay for a moment, and then sat down and bent thoughtfully over her needle-work.

From that day Travers grew more deeply in love and more reserved than before. How could it be otherwise, domesticated, as he was, with this lovely girl, and becoming daily more sensible of her beauty, goodness and intelligence? Yet he struggled against his inevitable attachment as a great treachery. Meantime he made rapid progress in his medical studies. It was while affairs were in this state that one morning the doctor entered the study holding the morning paper in his hand. Seating himself in his leather armchair, at the table, he said:

"I see, my dear Travers, that a full course of lectures is to be commenced at the medical college in Washington, and I think that you are sufficiently far advanced in your studies to attend them with great advantage—what say you?"

"Oh, sir," said Travers, upon whom the proposition had burst unexpectedly—"I should indeed be delighted to, if that were possible."

"There is no *if* about it, my boy; if you wish to go you shall do so. I have made up my mind to give you a professional education, and shall not stop half-way."

"Oh, sir, the obligation—the overwhelming obligation you lay upon me!"

"Nonsense, Travers! It is only a capital investment of funds! If I were a usurer, boy, I could not put out money to a better advantage. You will repay me, by and by, with compound interest; so just consider all that I may be able to do for you as a loan to be repaid when you shall have achieved success."

"I am afraid, sir, that that time will never—"

"No you are not!" interrupted the doctor—"and so don't let modesty run into hypocrisy. Now put up your books and go and tell your good to go to Washington, for you shall start by the next coach."

Much surprise it created in the little household by the news that Travers was going immediately to Washington to attend the medical lectures. There was but two days to prepare his wardrobe for the journey. Mrs. Rocks went cheerfully to work; Clara lent her willing and skilful aid, and at the end of the second day his clothes, in perfect order, were all neatly packed in his travelling trunk.

And on the morning of the third day Travers took leave of his mother and Clara, and for the first time left home to go out into the great world. Doctor Day accompanied him in the old green gig as far as Stanton, where he took the stage.

As soon as they had left the house Marsh Rocks went away to her own room to drop a few natural tears over the first parting with her son. Very lonely and desolate the mother felt as she stood weeping by the window, and straining her eyes to catch a distant view of the old green gig that had already rolled out of sight.

While she stood thus in her loneliness and desolation, the door silently opened, a footstep softly crossed the floor, a pair of arms was put around her neck, and Clara Day dropped her head upon the mother's bosom and wept softly.

Marsh Rocks pressed that beautiful form to her breast, and felt with dismay that the doctor's sweet daughter already returned her boy's silent love!

CHAPTER XXV.

CAPITOLA'S MOTHER.

A woman like a dew-drop she was purer than the purest,
And her noble heart the noblest, yes, and her rare
With the rarest;
And her eyes were dark and humid like the depth in
depth of lustre,
Hid 'neath the harshest, white her tresses, madder than the
wild grape's cluster,
Gleamed in raven-tinted plenty down her cheeks' rose-
tinted marble;
Then her voice's music—call it the well's bubbling,
The bird's warble.

—BROWNING.

"Cap!"

"Sir!"

"What the blazes is the matter with you?"
"What the blazes! You better say what the dust and ashes! I'm bored to death! I'm blue as indigo! There never was such a rum old place as this, or such a rum old uncle as you!"

"Cap! how often have I told you to leave off this Bowery boy talk? *Rum!* bah!" said Old Hurricane.

"Well, it is rum then! Nothing ever happens here! The silence deafens me! the plenty takes away my appetite! the safety makes me low!"

"Hum! you are like the Bowery boys in times of peace, 'spooling for a fight.'"

"For want of having my blood stirred, and I wish I was back in the Bowery. Something was always happening *there*! One day a fire, next day a fight, another day a fire and a fight together!"

"Umph! and you to run with the engine!"

"Don't talk about it, uncle! it makes me home sick—every day something glorious to stir one's blood! Here *nothing* ever happens, hardly! It has been three days since I caught Black Donald; ten days since you blowed up the whole household! Oh! I wish the barns would catch fire! I wish thieves would break in and steal! I wish Demon's Run would only rise to a flood and play the demon for once! *Oh—yah—co!*" said Cap, opening her mouth with a yawn, wide enough to threaten the destruction of her jaws.

"Capitola," said the old man very gravely, "I am getting seriously uneasy about you, I know I am a rough old soldier, quite unfit to educate a young girl, and that Mrs. Condiment can't manage you, and—I'll consult Mr. Goodwin!" he concluded, getting up and putting on his hat, and walking out of the breakfast-room, where this conversation had taken place.

Cap. laughed to herself—"I hope it is not a

sin! I know I should die of the blues if I couldn't give vent to my feelings—and these are mine!"

Capitola had sorely exaggerated her condition. The monotony of her life affected her spirits; the very absence of the necessity of thinking and caring for herself, left a dull void in her heart and brain; and as the winter waned, the annual spring fever of lassitude and dejection to which mercurial organizations like her own are subject, tended to increase the malady that Mrs. Condiment termed "a lowness of spirits."

At his wit's end, from the combined feelings of his responsibility and his helplessness in his ward's case, Old Hurricane went and laid the matter before the Rev. Mr. Goodwin.

Having reached the minister's house, and found him alone and disengaged in the library, Old Hurricane first found him over to strict secrecy, and then "made a clean breast of it;" told him where Capitola had been brought up, and under what circumstances he had found her.

The honest country clergyman was shocked beyond all immediate power of recovering himself—so shocked, in fact, that Old Hurricane, fearing he had gone too far, hastened to say:

"But mind, on my truth as a man, my honour as a soldier, and my faith as a Christian, I declare that that wild, reckless, desolate child has passed unscathed through the terrible ordeal of destitution, poverty, exposure! She *has* sir! She is as innocent as the country's air, and I'd cut off the tongue and ears of any man that said otherwise."

"I do not say otherwise, my friend! but I say that she has suffered a frightful series of perils."

"She has come out of them safe, sir! I know it by a thousand signs—what I fear for her is the future! I can't manage her! She won't obey me, except when she likes! she has never been taught obedience or been accustomed to subordination, and don't understand either! She rides and walks out alone in spite of all I can do or say! If she were a boy, I'd thrash her! But what can I do with a girl?" said Old Hurricane, in despair.

"Look her up in her chamber, until she is brought to reason," suggested the minister.

"Demmy, she'd jump out of the window and break her neck! or hang herself in her garters! or starve herself to death! You don't know what an unmanageable thing she is. Some birds, if caged, beat themselves to death against the bars of their prison! she is just such a wild bird as that!"

"Humph! it is a difficult case to manage; but you should not shrink from responsibility; you should be firm with her."

"That's just what I can't be with the witch, confound her! she is such a wag, such a droll, such a mimic; disobeys me in such a mocking, cajoling, affectionate way! I could not give her pain if her soul depended on it."

"Then you should talk to her! try moral suasion."

"Yes, if I could only get her to be serious long enough to listen to me! But you see, Cap. isn't *sentimental*! and if I try to be, she laughs in my face!"

"But then she is so insoberable to all the benefits you have conferred upon her—will not gratitude influence her?"

"Yes; so far as repaying me with a genuine affection, fervent caresses and careful attentions to my little comforts can go! but Cap. evidently thinks that the restriction of her liberty is too heavy a price to pay for protection and support! The little rogue! I think of her actually threatening in her good humored way, to cite me before the nearest justice to show cause why I detained her in my house!"

"Well, you could easily do that, I suppose, and she could no longer oppose your authority."

"No, that is just what I *couldn't* do—I couldn't show any legal right to detain Capitola."

"Humph, that complicates the case very much."

"Yes; and much more than you think! for I wish to keep Capitola until she is of legal age. I do not wish that she should fall into the hands of her perfidious guardian, until I shall be able to bring legal proof of his perjury."

"Then it appears that this girl has received foul play from her friends?"

"Foul play! I should think so! Gabriel Le Noir has very nearly put his neck into a halter."

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rejection to which marocul
were as subject, tended to
at Mrs. Condiment termed

the combined feelings of
a helplessness in his ward's
and laid the matter be-
win.

Minister's house, and found
ing in the library. Old
him over to secret stores,
a breast of it," told him
on brought up, and under
had found her,

clergyman was shocked
over recovering himself
at Old Hurricane, fearing
tended to do so.

with as a man, my honour
as a Christian, I declare
desolate child has passed
ribble ordeal of destitu-
tion! She has sir! She
most daintily sheltered
nity! she is sir! and I'd
re of any man that said

me, my friend! but I say
ghful series of perils."
—thou safe, sir! I know
what I fear for her is
go her! She won't obey
her! she has never been
accustomed to subordi-
nate either! She rides
all I can do or say! I
sh her! But what can
Old Hurricane, in despair,
chamber until she is
sted the minister.

out of the window and
herself in her garters!
You don't know what
to us. Some birds, if
death against the bars
at such a wild bird as

it case to manage; but
om responsibility; you
/ be with the witch,
a wag, such a droll,
in such a mocking,
I could not give her
ny."

to her! try moral
her to be serious long
at you see, Cap. isn't
be, she laughs in my

isible to all the bene-
her—will not grati-
me with a genuine
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of but Cap. evidently
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ation and support—
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ates the case very

can you think for I
is of legal age. I
all into the hands of
I shall be able to
is girl has received

so! Gabriel Le
back into a halter."

"Gabriel Le Noir! Colonel Le Noir! Our
neighbour!" exclaimed the minister.

"Easily so!—Parson! you have given me
your word as a Christian minister, to be silent
forever concerning this interview, or until I give
you leave to speak of it."

"Yes, Major, and I repeat my promise; but
indeed, sir, you astound me!"

"Listen! and let astonishment rise to con-
sideration. I will tell you who Capitoa is. You,
sir, have been in this neighbourhood only ten
years, and consequently you know Gabriel Le
Noir only as the proprietor of Hidden House, a
widower with one grown son—"

"—And as a gentleman of irreproachable
reputation, in good standing both in the church
and in the county."

"Exactly. A man that pays his pew-
rent, gives good dinners, and takes off his hat to
women and clergymen. Well, sir, this gentleman
of irreproachable character and morals—this
citizen of consideration in the community—this
member in good standing with the Church has
qualified himself for a twenty years' residence in
the penitentiary, even if not for the exaltation of
a hangman's halter."

"Sir, I am immensely shocked to hear you
say so; and I must still believe that there is some
great mistake."

"Wait until I tell you: I, Ira Warfield, have
known Gabriel Le Noir as a villain for the last
eighteen years. I tell you so without scruple, and
hold myself ready to maintain my words in field
or forum, by sword or knife. Well, having known
him so long, for such a knave, I was in no man-
ner surprised to discover some six months ago,
that he was also a criminal, and only needed
exposure to become a felon."

"Sir, sir, this is strong language!"
"I am willing to back it with 'life, liberty, and
sacred honor,' as the Declaration of Independence
has it. Listen: Some sixteen years ago, before
you came to take this pastoral charge, the Hidden
House was occupied by old Victor Le Noir, the
father of Eugene, the heir, and of Gabriel the
present usurper. The old man died, leaving a will
to this effect: the landed estate, including the
coal and iron mines, the Hidden House, and all
the negroes, stock, furniture, and other personal
property upon the premises, to his eldest son,
Eugene, with this proviso: that if Eugene should
die without issue, the landed estate, houses,
negroes, etc., should descend to his younger
brother Gabriel. To Gabriel he left his bank-
stock and blessing."

"An equitable will," observed the minister.
"Yes; but hear. At the time of his father's
death, Eugene was travelling in Europe. On re-
ceiving the news, he immediately returned home
bringing with him a lovely young creature, a
mere child, that he presented to his astonished
neighbours as Madame Eugene Le Noir. I de-
clare to you there was one simultaneous outcry of
shame, that he should have trapped into matrimo-
ny a creature so infamously—for she was scarcely
fourteen years of age."

"It was indeed highly improper," said the
minister.

"So thought all the neighbourhood; but when
they found out how it happened, disapproval
changed to condemnation. She was the daughter
of a French peer, perished on the scaffold in the
cause of liberty; she was thrown helpless, friend-
less, and penniless upon the cold charity of the
world; Providence cast her in the way of our
sensitive and enthusiastic young traveller. He
loved her; he loved her; and was casting about
for a means how he could help without com-
promising her, when the news of his father's ill-
ness summoned him home. Then, seeing no
better way of protecting her, after a little hesita-
tion on account of her tender years, he married
her, and brought her with him."

"Good deeds, we know, must be rewarded in
heaven, since on earth they are so often pun-
ished."

"He did not long enjoy his bride. She was
just the most beautiful creature that ever was
seen—with a promise of still more glorious beauty
in ripper years. I have seen handsome women
and pretty women, but Madame Eugene Le Noir
was the only perfectly beautiful woman I ever
saw in my long life. My own aged eyes seemed
enriched only to look at her. She adored Eu-

gene, too—any one could see that. At first she
spoke English in 'broken music,' but soon her
accent became as perfect as if she had been native
born—how could it have been otherwise when her
teacher and inspirer was Love! She won all
hearts with her loveliness!—Humph! hear me,
you fool—worse, an Old Hurricane, betrayed
into discourses of love and beauty, merely by the
remembrance of Madame Eugene Le Noir! Ah,
bright, exotic flower! she did not bloom long.
The bride had scarcely settled down into the wife,
when one night Eugene Le Noir did not come
home as usual. The next day his dead body
was found in the woods around the Hidden
House with a bullet in his brain. The murder-
er was never discovered. Gabriel Le Noir
came in haste from the military post where
he had been stationed. Madame Eugene was
never seen abroad after the death of her husband.
It was reported that she had lost her reason—
a consequence that surprised no one. Eugene
having died without issue, and his young widow
being mad, Gabriel, by the terms of his father's
will, stepped at once into the full possession of
the whole property."

"Something of all this I have heard before,"
said the minister.

"Very likely; for these facts and falsehoods
are the common property of the neighbourhood.
But what you have not heard before, and what is
not known to any now living, except the criminals,
the victims and myself, is, that three months
after the death of her husband, Madame Eugene
Le Noir gave birth to twins—one living, one
dead. The dead child was privately buried; the
living one, together with the nurse, that was the
sister of the birth, was abducted."

"Great Heaven, can this be true!" exclaimed
the minister, shocked beyond all power of self-
control.

"True as gospel! I have proof enough to
carry conviction to any honest breast—to satisfy
any cavalier—except a court of justice. You
shall hear. You remember the dying woman
whom you dragged me out in the snow-storm to
see—blame you?"

"Yes."

"She was the abducted nurse, escaped and
returned! It was to make a deposition to the
facts I am about to relate, that she sent you to
my cell—said Old Hurricane; and with that he com-
menced and related the whole dark history of
crime comprised in the nurse's dying deposition.
They examined the instrument together, and
Old Hurricane again related, in brief, the inci-
dents of his hurried journey to New York; his
meeting and identifying Capitoa, and bringing
her home in safety to his house."

"And then," said the old man, "you perceive
that this child whose birth was feloniously con-
cealed, and who was cast away to perish among
the wretched beggars, thieves, and street-walkers
of New York, is really the only living child of the
late Eugene Le Noir, and the sole inheritor of
the Hidden House, with its vast acres of fields,
forests, iron and coal-mines, water-powers, steam
mills, furnaces and foundries—wealth that I
would not undertake to estimate within a million
of dollars!—all of which is now held and enjoyed
by that snarling villain, Gabriel Le Noir!"

"But," said the minister, gravely, "you gave
of course, commenced proceedings on the part of
your protegee."

"Then," I will tell you what I have done.
When I first brought Cap. home, I was moved
not only by the desire of wreaking vengeance upon
a most atrocious miscreant who had done me an
irreparable injury, but also by sympathy for the
little wretch who had won my heart at first sight.
Therefore you may judge I lost no time in prepar-
ing to strike a double blow which should ruin my
own mortal enemy, and reinstate my favorite in
her rights. With this view, immediately on my
return home, I sent for Breese, my confidential
attorney, and laid the whole matter before him."

"And he—"

"To my dismay he told me that though the
case was clear enough, it was not sufficiently
strong, in a legal point of view, to justify us in
bringing suit for this dying deposition of the
mulatto nurse could not be received as
evidence in our county courts."

"You knew that before, sir, I presume."
"Of course I did; but I thought it was a law-
yer's business to get over such difficulties; and I

assure you, parson, that I flew into a passion, and
cured court and county law, and lawyers to my
heart's content! I would have quarrelled with old
Breese, then and there, only Breese won't get ex-
cited. He very coolly advised me to keep the
matter close, and my eye open, and gather all the
corroborative testimony I could find, and that in
the meantime he would reflect upon the best
manner of proceeding."

"I think, Major Warfield, that his counsel was
wise and disinterested. But tell me, sir, of the
girl's mother! Is it not astonishing, in fact, is it
not perfectly inconceivable, that so lovely a
woman as you have represented her to be, should
have consented to the concealment, if not to the
destruction of her own legitimate offspring?"

"Sir, to me, it is not inconceivable at all! She
was at once an orphan and a widow; a
stranger in a strange land; a poor, feeble, dis-
abled, broken-hearted child, in the power of the cunning-
est and most unscrupulous villain that the Lord
ever suffered to live! I wonder at nothing that
he might have deceived or frightened her into doing!"

"Heaven forgive us! Have I known that man
for ten years, to hear this account of him at last!
But tell me, sir, have you really any idea of
what has been the fate of the poor young
widow?"

"No—not the slightest. Immediately after
his brother's funeral, Gabriel Le Noir gave out
that Madame Eugene had lost her reason through
excessive grief, soon after which he took her
with him to the North, and upon his return
there, reported that he had left her in a celebrated
Lunatic Asylum. The story was probable enough,
and received universal belief. Only now I do not
credit it, and do not know whether the widow be
living or dead; or if living, whether she be mad or
sane; if dead, whether she came to her end by
fair means or foul."

"Merciful Heaven, sir! you do not mean to
say—"

"Yes, I do mean to say; and if you would
like to know what is on my private mind I'll
tell you. I believe that Madame Eugene Le
Noir has been treacherously made away with
by the same infernal demon at whose instiga-
tion her husband was murdered and her child
stolen."

The minister seemed crushed beneath the over-
whelming weight of this communication; he
passed his hand over his brow, and thence down
his face, and sighed deeply; for a few moments
he seemed unable to reply, and when he spoke it
was only to say:

"In this matter, Major Warfield, I can offer
you no counsel better than that of your confiden-
tial attorney—follow the light that you have, un-
til it lead you to the full elucidation of this affair,
and may heaven grant that you may find Colonel
Le Noir less guilty than you apprehend."

"Parson!—bumping! When charity drives it
ought to be turned off by justice! I am follow-
ing the little light I have! I suspect from the de-
scription, that the wretch who at Le Noir's instance
carried off the nurse and child, was no other than
the notorious Black Donald. I have offered an
additional thousand dollars for his apprehension,
and if he is taken he will be condemned to death,
make a last dying speech and confession, and
give up his accomplices, the accomplished Colonel
Le Noir among the rest!"

"If the latter really was an accomplice, there
could be no better way of discovering the fact
than to bring this Black Donald to justice; but I
greatly fear there is little hope of that."

"Aye, but there is! Listen! the long im-
punity enjoyed by this desperate man has made him dar-
ing to fatality! Why! I was within a hair's
breadth of capturing him myself a few days ago."

"Hut is it possible?" asked the minister, with
a look of surprise and interest.

"Aye, was I! And you shall hear all about
it!" said Old Hurricane. And upon that he
commenced and told the minister the adventure
of Capitoa with Black Donald at Hurricane
Hall.

The minister was amazed, yet could not for-
bear to say:

"It seems to me, however, that it was Capitoa
who was within a hair's breadth of capturing this
notorious desperado!"

"Pooh! she clung to him like the reckless
lunatic that she is; but lord, he would have car-

ried her off on his back if it had not been for me."

The minister smiled a little to himself and then said:

"This protégée of yours is a very remarkable girl, as interesting to me in her character, as she is in her history; her very spirit, courage and insubordination make her singularly hard to manage and apt to go astray. With your permission I will make her acquaintance, with the view of seeing what good I can do her."

"Pray, do so, for then you will be better able to counsel me how to manage the capricious little witch, who if I attempt to check her in her wild and dangerous freedom of action, tells me plainly that liberty is too precious a thing to be exchanged for food and clothing, and that rather than live in bondage she would throw herself upon the protection of the court!—if she does *that* the game is up! Le Noir, against whom we can as yet prove nothing, would claim her as his niece and ward, and get her into his power for the purpose of making away with her, as he did with her father and mother."

"Oh! for heaven's sake, sir, no more of that until we have further opportunity," said the minister, uneasily, adding—"I will see your very interesting protégée to-morrow."

"Do I do to-morrow, to-day, this hour, any time?" said Major Warfield, as he cordially took leave of the pastor.

CHAPTER XXV.

CAP. 'S TRICKS AND PERILS.

I'll be merry and free,
I'll be sad for nobody;
Nesbodee caros for me,
I care for nesbodee.—BURNS.

The next day, according to agreement, the pastor came and dined at Hurricane Hall. During the dinner he had ample opportunity of observing Capitola.

In the afternoon Major Warfield took an occasion of leaving him alone with the contentious young object of his visit.

Cap., with her quick perceptions, instantly discovered the drift and purpose of this action, which immediately provoked all the mischievous propensities of her selfish spirit.

"Uncle means that I shall be lectured by the good pastor; if he preaches to me, *won't* I humiliate him? to the top of his bent?—that's all!" was her secret resolution, as she sat demurely, with pursed-up lips, bending over her needle-work.

The honest and well-meaning old country clergyman hunched his chair a little nearer to the perverse young rebel, and, gingerly,—for he was half afraid of his questionable subject, entered into conversation with her.

To his surprise and pleasure, Capitola replied with the decorum of a young nun.

Encouraged by her manner, the good minister went on to say how much interested he felt in her welfare; how deeply he compassionated her lot in never having possessed the advantage of a mother's teaching; how anxious he was by his counsels to make up to her as much as possible such a deficiency.

Here Capitola put up both her hands and dropped her face upon them.

Still further encouraged by this exhibition of feeling, Mr. Goodwin went on. He told her that it behooved her, who was a motherless girl, to be even more circumspet than others, lest through very ignorance she might err; and in particular he warned her against riding or walking out alone, or indulging in any freedom of manners that might draw upon her the animadversion of their very strict community.

"Oh, sir I know I have been very indiscreet, and I am very miserable!" said Capitola, in a heart-broken voice.

"My dear child, your errors have hitherto been those of ignorance only, and I am very much pleased to find how much your good uncle has been mistaken; and how ready you are to do strictly right when the way is pointed out!" said the minister, pleased to his honest heart's core that he had made this deep impression.

A heavy sigh burst from the bosom of Capitola.

"What is the matter, my dear child?" he said, kindly.

"Oh, sir, if I had only known you before!" exclaimed Capitola, bitterly.

"Why, my dear?—I can do you just as much good now."

"Oh, no, sir! it is too late! it is too late!"

"It is never too late to do well."

"Oh, yes, sir, it is for me! Oh, how I wish I had had your good counsel before! it would have saved me from so much trouble!"

"My dear child, you make me seriously uneasy! do explain yourself," said the old pastor, drawing his chair closer to hers, and trying to get a look at the distressed little face that was bowed down upon her hand, and veiled with her hair—"Do tell me, my dear, what is the matter?"

"Oh, sir, I'm afraid to tell you I you'd hate and despise me! you'd never speak to me again!"

"My dear child," said the minister, very gravely and sorrowfully, "wintever your offence has been, and you make me fear that it has been a very serious one, I invite you to confide in me, and having done so I promise, however I may may mourn the sin not to 'hate,' or 'despise,' or forsake the sinner. Come, confide in me!"

"Oh, sir, I dar'n't! indeed I dar'n't!" moaned Capitola.

"My poor girl!" said the minister, "if I am to do you any good, it is absolutely necessary that you make me your confidant."

"Oh, sir, I have been a very wicked girl! I dar'n't tell you *how* wicked I have been!"

"Does your good uncle know or suspect this wrong-doing of yours?"

"Uncle! Oh, no, sir! He'd turn me out of doors. He'd kill me! Indeed he would, sir. Please don't tell him!"

"You forget, my child, that I do not know the nature of your offence," said the minister, in a state of painful anxiety.

"But I'm going to inform you, sir! and, oh, I hope you will take pity on me and tell me what to do; for though I dread to speak, I can't keep it on my conscience any longer, it is such a heavy weight on my breast!"

"Sin always is, my poor girl!" said the pastor, with a deep groan.

"But, sir, you know I had no mother, as you said you self."

"I know it, my poor girl, and am ready to make every allowance," said the old pastor, with a deep sigh, not knowing what next to expect.

"And—and—I hope you will forgive me, sir! but—but he was so handsome I couldn't help looking at him!"

"Miss BLACK!" cried the horrified pastor.

"There! I *knew* you'd just go and bite my head off the very first thing! Oh dear, what shall I do!" sobbed Capitola.

The good pastor, who had started to his feet, remained gazing upon her in a panic of consternation, murmuring to himself:

"Good angels! I am fated to hear more great sins than if I were a prison chaplain!" Then going up to the sobbing delinquent, he said:

"Unhappy girl! who is this person of whom you speak?"

"H—h—h—him that I met when I went walking in the woods!" sobbed Capitola.

"Heaven! this is a sin worse than my very worst fear! Wretched girl! tell me instantly the name of this base deceiver!"

"He—he—he's no base deceiver; he—he—he's very amiable and good-looking; and—and—that's why I liked him so much; it was all my fault, not his, poor, dear fellow!"

"His name?" sternly demanded the pastor.

"Alf—Alf—Alfred," wept Capitola.

"Alfred whom?"

"Alfred Blon—Blon—Blenheim!"

"Miserable girl! how often have you met this miscreant in the forest!"

"I—don't—know!" sobbed Capitola.

"Where is the wretch to be found?"

"Oh, please don't hurt him, sir! Please don't! He—he—he's hid in the closet in my room."

A groan that seemed to have rent his heart in twain burst from the bosom of the minister, as he repeated in deepest horror:

"In your room! (Well! I must prevent murder being done!) Did you not know, you poor child, the danger you ran by giving this young

man private interviews; and, above all, admitting him to your apartment? Wretched girl! better you'd never been born than ever so to have received a man!"

"Man? man? man?—I'd like to know what you mean by *that*, Mr. Goodwin!" exclaimed Capitola, lifting her eyes flashing through their tears.

"I mean the man to whom you have given these private interviews."

"I—I give private interviews to a man! Take care what you say, Mr. Goodwin! I won't be insulted! no not even by you!"

"Then if you are not talking of a man, who or what in the world are you talking about?" exclaimed the amazed minister.

"Why, Alfred, the Blenheim poodle that strayed away from some of the neighbor's houses, and that I found in the woods and brought home and hid in my closet, for fear he would be inquired after, or uncle would find it out, and make me give him up! I knew it was wrong, but then he was so pretty!"

Before Capitola had finished her speech Mr. Goodwin had seized his hat, and, muttering out of the house in indignation, nearly overturning Old Hurricane, whom he met in the lawn, and to whom he said:

"Thrush that girl as if she were a bad boy—for she richly deserves it!"

"There! I told you I saw you see what a time I have with her! she made me sweat, I tell you!" said Old Hurricane, in triumph.

"Oh, oh, oh," groaned this sorely tried minister.

"What is it now!" inquired Old Hurricane.

"The pastor took the major's arm, and while they walked up and down before the house, told how he had been 'sold' by Capitola, ending by saying:

"You will have to take her firmly in hand."

"I'll do it," said Old Hurricane, "I'll do it."

The pastor then called for his horse, and, resisting all his host's entreaties to stay to tea, took his departure.

Major Warfield re-entered the house, resolving to say nothing to Capitola, for the present, but to seize the very first opportunity of punishing her for this flippancy.

The village fair had commenced on Monday. It had been arranged that all Major Warfield's family should go, though not all upon the same day. It was proposed that on Thursday, when the festival should be at its height, Major Warfield, Capitola and the house servants should go. And on Saturday, Mrs. Condiment, Mr. Ezy, and the farm-servants should have a holiday for the same purpose.

Therefore upon Thursday morning all the household bestirred themselves at an unusually early hour, and appeared before breakfast in their best Sunday's suit.

Capitola came down to breakfast in a rich, blue silk carriage dress, looking so fresh, blooming and joyous, that it went to the old man's heart to disappoint her; yet Old Hurricane resolved, as the pastor had told him, to "be firm," and once for all, by inflicting punishment to bring her to a sense of her errors.

"There, you need not trouble yourself to get ready, Capitola, you shall not go to the fair with us!" he said, as Cap. took her seat.

"Sir!" exclaimed the girl, in surprise.

"Oh, yes! you must stare! but I'm in earnest! you have behaved very badly! you have deeply offended our pastor! you have no reverence, no docility, no propriety, and I mean to bring you to a sense of your position by depriving you of some of your indulgences! and in a word, to begin I say you shall not go to the fair to-day!"

"You mean, sir, that I shall not go with you, although you promised that I should," said Cap., coolly.

"I mean you shall not go at all, demmy!"

"I'd like to know who'll prevent me," said Cap.

"I will, Miss Vixen! Demmy! I'll not be set at naught by a beggar!—Mrs. Condiment! leave the room, mum, and don't be sitting there listening to every word I have to say to my ward."

Wool, be off with yourself, sir! what do you stand there gaping and staring for!—be off, or—

—the old man looked around for a missile,

but before except by himself

"Now, himself as

"I did servants, derment

Hurricane storm."

"Sir, if or my leg

but to of me *da-da-da*, not exha

gaily.

"Fish! more of the cried Old

the floor—dantly to settle you

"Uncle dress gown your car

and ride Cap

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"Yes, as your will, ordered as

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"Ungraciously as

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"Gasp! sell my car

and ride Cap

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"Eh!" ment.

"Yes, Ma

"I should intruding to

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"Yes," with her b

"Stoop, Capitola, as

"Why? ciously.

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Wretched girl
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—I'd like to know what
fr. Goodwin!" exclaimed
she flashing through their

to whom you have given
to interviews to a man!
Mr. Goodwin! I won't
by you!"

not talking of a man, who
you talking about!" ex-
claimed.

the neighbor's house that stray-
and brought home and
er he would be inquired
it out, and make me
was wrong, but then he

finished her speech Mr.
hat, and rushed out of
s, nearly overturning Old
net in the lawn, and to

if she was a bad boy—
silly now you see what a
r. I was in triumph
d this sorely tried min-

quired Old Hurricane,
major's arm, and while
before the house, told
by Capitola, ending by

her firmly in hand,
d Hurricane, "I'll do
for his horse, and resist-
to easy to take, took

red the house, resolving
s, for the present, but
opportunity of punishing

commenced on Monday.
at all Major Warfield's
not all upon the same
at on Thursday, when
height, Major War-

his ardent should go
ndment, Mr. Ezy, and
have a holiday for the

day morning all the
selves at an unusually
before breakfast in their

breakfast in a rich, blue
so fresh, blooming and
the old man's heart to
Hurricane resolved, as

to "be firm," and once
ment to bring her to a
trouble yourself to get
not go to the fair with
ok her seat.

girl, in surprise.
are! but I'm in earn-
be sitting there listen-
to say to my ward.

self, sir! what do you
staring for?—be off, or
around for a minute,

but before he found one the room was evacuated
except by himself and Capitola.

"Now, minion!" he began as soon as he found
himself alone with the little rebel:

"I did not choose to mortify you before the
servants, but once for all, I will have you to un-
derstand that I intend to be obeyed!" And Old
Hurricane "gathered his brows like a gathering
storm."

"Sir, if you were really my uncle, or my father,
or my legal guardian, I should have no choice,
but to obey you; but the same fate that made me
disobedient made me free! a freedom that I would
not exchange for any guided slavery!" said Cap-
itola, gaily.

"Fish! tush! pshaw! I say I will have no
more of this nonsense! I say I will be obeyed,"
cried Old Hurricane, striking his cane down upon
the floor—"and in proof of it I order you imme-
diately to go and take off that gala dress and
settle yourself down to your studies for the day."

"Uncle I will obey you as far as taking of this
dress goes, for since you won't give me a seat in
your carriage I shall have to put on my livery
and ride Gyp," said Cap. coolly and humorously.

"What! do you dare to hint that you have
the slightest idea of going to the fair against my
will?"

"Yes, sir," said Cap. gaily—"sorry it's against
your will, but can't help it! not need to be
ordered about and don't know how to submit, and
so I'm going!"

"Ungrateful girl! actually meditating disobe-
dience on the horse I gave her!"

"Easy now, uncle—fair and easy! I did not
sell my free will for Gyp! I would not for a thou-
sand Gyps! He was a free gift!" said Capitola,
beginning an impatient little dance about the floor.

"Come here to me! Come—here—to-me!"
exclaimed the old man, p-temporarily, rapping his
cane down upon the floor with every syllable.

Capitola danced up to him, and stood, half
smiling, and fidgeting and arranging the lace of
her under sleeve.

"Listen to me, you witch! Do you intend to
obey me or not?"

"Nor!" said Cap., good-humoredly, adjusting
her cameo bracelet, and holding up her arm to
see its effect.

"You will not! Then demny, Miss, I shall
know how to make you!" thundered old Hurri-
cane, bringing the point of his stick down with a
sharp rap.

"Oh!" cried Capitola, looking up in astonish-
ment.

"Yes, Miss, that's what I said! MAKE YOU!"
"I should like to know how," said Cap., re-
turning to her cool good-humor.

"You would, you would? Demny, I'll tell
you! I have broken haughtier spirits than yours
in my life. Would you know how?"

"Yes," said Capitola, indifferently, still busied
with her bracelets.

"Sloop, and I will whisper the mystery."

Capitola bent her graceful head to hear.

"What the devil!" hissed Old Hurricane, mali-
ciously.

Capitola sprang up as if she had been shot,
wave after wave of blood riding up in burning
blushes over neck, face and forehead, then turn-
ing abruptly, she walked off to the window.

Old Hurricane, terrified at the effect of his rude,
rash words, stood excommunicating himself for
having been provoked to use them, nor was the
next aspect of Capitola one calculated to re-assure
his perturbed feelings.

She turned around; her face was as white and
still as marble, except her glittering eyes, that
half shewed under their long lashes, flash-
ed like lightning, turning her head and keeping
her eyes fixed upon him, with the slow and glid-
ing motion, and the deep and measured voice that
searcely seemed to belong to a denizen of earth,
she approached and stood before him, and spoke
these words:

"Uncle, in all the sorrows, shames and suffer-
ings of my destitute childhood, no one ever dis-
honored my person with a blow; and if ever you
should have the misfortune to forget your man-
hood so far as to strike me—" she paused, drew
her breath hard between her set teeth, grew a
shade whiter, while her dark eyes dilated until a
white ring flamed around the iris.

"Oh, you perfidious witch, what then?" cried
Old Hurricane, in dismay.

(3)

"Why, then," said Capitola, speaking in a low,
deep, and measured tone, and keeping her gaze
fixed upon his astonished face, "the—first—time
—I—should—find—you—salsep—I—would—
take—a—razor—and—"

"Cut my throat! I feel you would, you terrible
terragant!" shuddered Old Hurricane.

"Share your head of swish, smow!"
said Cap., bounding off and laughing merrily as
she ran out of the room.

In an instant she came bounding back, saying:
"Uncle! I will meet you at the fair! au revoir!
au revoir!" and kissing her hand, she danced
away and ran off to her room.

"She'll kill me! I know she will! If she
don't in one way she will in another! Whew!
I'm perspiring at every pore. Wool! Wool, you
scoondrel!" exclaimed the old man, jerking the
bell-rope as if he would have broken the wires.

"Yes, sir! here I am marse!" exclaimed that
worthy, hastening in, in a state of perturbation,
for he dreaded another storm.

"Wool! go down to the stables and tell every
man there, that if either of them allows a horse
to be brought out for the use of Miss Black,
I'll pay them alive, and break every bone in
their skins! Away with you!"

"Yes, sir!" cried the shocked and terrified
staid, hurrying off to convey his panic to the
stable.

Old Hurricane's carriage being ready, he en-
tered it and drove off to the fair.

Next, the house servants (with the exception of
Pitapat, who was commanded to remain behind
and wait upon his mistress) went off in a wagon.

When they were all gone, Capitola dressed
herself in her riding-habit, and sent Pitapat down
to the stables, to order one of the grooms to
saddle Gyp, and bring her up for her.

Now when the little maid delivered this mes-
sage, the unfortunate grooms were filled with
dismay—they feared their tyrannical little mas-
ter, almost as much as their despotic old master,
who, in the next change of his capricious temper
might punish all these heads for crossing the will
of his favorite, even though in doing so they had
followed his directions. An immediate private
consultation was the consequence, and the result
was that the head groom came to Pitapat, told
her that he was sorry, but that Miss Black's pony
had fallen lame.

The little maid went back with this answer.
When she had gone, the head groom, calling
to his fellows, said:

"That young gal ain't a-gwine to be fooled
either by ole marse or no! She'll be down here
herself, nex' minute and have the horse walked
out. Now we must have him lame a little.
Light a match here, Jen, and I'll burn him
foot."

This was immediately done. And, sure enough,
while poor Gyp was still smarting with his burn,
Capitola came, holding up her riding train
and hurrying to the scene, and asking indig-
nantly:

"Why darses to say that my horse is lame?
Bring him out here this instant that I may see
him."

The groom immediately took poor Gyp, and
led him limping to the presence of his mistress.

At the sight Capitola was almost ready to cry
with grief and indignation.

"It was not lame last evening. It must have
been your carelessness, you good-for-nothing set
of loungers! And if he is not well enough to
take me to the fair to-morrow, at least, I'll have
the whole set of you lamed for life!" she ex-
claimed, angrily, as she turned off and went up
to the house—not caring so much, after all, for
her personal disappointment, as for Old
Hurricane's triumph.

Cap's ill-humor did not last long. She soon
exchanged her riding-habit for a morning wrap-
per, and took her needle-work and sat down to
sew by the side of Mrs. Condiment, in the house-
keeper's room.

The day passed as usual, only that just after
sunset Mrs. Condiment, as a matter of precau-
tion, went all over the house, securing windows
and doors before nightfall. Then, after an early
tea, Mrs. Condiment, Capitola and the little maid,
Pitapat, gathered around the bright little wood
fire, that the chilly Spring evening made necessary
in the housekeeper's room. Mrs. Condiment
was knitting, Capitola stitching a bosom for the

Major's shirt, and Pitapat winding yarn from a
reel.

The conversation of the three females left
alone in the old house naturally turned upon sub-
jects of fear—ghosts, witches, and robbers.

Mrs. Condiment had a formidable collection of
accredited stories of apparitions, warnings, dreams
omens, etc., all true as gospel. There was a
haunted house, she said, in their own neighbor-
hood—The Hidden House. It was thus authen-
ticated that ever since the mysterious murder of
Eugene Le Noir, unaccountable sights and sounds
had been seen and heard in and about the dwell-
ing. A traveller, a brother officer of Colonel Le
Noir, had slept there once, and "in the dead
dark and middle of the night" had had his
curtains drawn by a lady, pale and passing fair,
dressed in white, with flowing hair, who, as soon
as he attempted to speak to her, fled. And it
was well known that there was no lady about the
premises.

Another time, old Mr. Ezy, himself, when out
after coons, and coming through the woods near
the house, had been attracted by seeing a window
near the roof lighted up by a strange blue flame;
drawing near, he saw within the lighted room a
female clothed in white, passing and repassing
the window.

Another time, when old Major Warfield was out
with his dogs, the chase led him past the haunted
house, and as he went by he caught a glimpse of
a pale, wan, sorrowful female figure pressed
against the window pane of an upper room, which
vanished in an instant.

But might not that have been some young
woman staying at the house? asked Capitola.

"No, my child, it is well ascertained that since
the murder of Eugene Le Noir, and the disappear-
ance of his lovely young wife, no white female
has crossed the threshold of that fatal house,"
said Mrs. Condiment.

"Disappearance did you say? Can a lady of
condition disappear from a neighborhood and no
inquiry be made for her?"

"No, my dear, there was inquiry, and it was
answered plausibly that Madame Eugene was
insane and sent off to a lunatic asylum; but
there are those who believe that the lovely lady
was privately made away with," whispered Mrs.
Condiment.

"How dreadful! I did not think such things
happened in a quiet country neighborhood.
Something like that occurred indeed, in New
York, within my own recollection, however,"
said Capitola—who straightway commenced and
related the story of Mary Rogers, and all other
stories of terror that memory supplied her with.

As for poor little Pitapat, she did not presume
to enter into the conversation, but with her ball
of yarn suspended in her hand, her eyes started
until they threatened to burst from their sockets,
and her chin dropped until her mouth gaped wide
open, she sat and swallowed every word, listening
with a thousand-audience power.

By the time they had frightened themselves
pretty thoroughly, the clock struck eleven, and
they thought it was time to retire.

"Will you be afraid, Mrs. Condiment," asked
Capitola.

"Well, my dear, if I am, I must try to trust in
the Lord and overcome it, since it is no use to
be afraid. I have fastened up the house well and
I have brought in Growler, the bull-dog, to sleep
on the mat outside of my bedroom door, so I
shall say my prayers and try to go to sleep. I
dare you there is no danger, only it seems some-
times like for us three women to be left in this
big house by ourselves."

"Yes," said Capitola; "but as you say there is
no danger; and as for me, if it will give you any
comfort or courage to hear me say it, I am not
the least afraid, though I sleep in such a remote
room, and have no one but Fatty, who, having no
more heart than a hare, is not near such a
powerful protector as Growler."

And, bidding her little maid to take up the
night-lamp, Capitola wished Mrs. Condiment
good-night, and left the housekeeper's room.

CHAPTER XXVI.

THE PERIL AND THE PLOTTING OF CAP.

"Who that had seen her form so light
For swiftness only turned
Would have thought in a thing so slight
Such a fiery spirit burned?"

Very dreary looked the dark and silent passages as they went on towards Capitola's distant chamber.

When at last they reached it, however, and opened the door, the cheerful scene within quite reanimated Capitola's spirits. The door of her little maid had prepared a blazing wood fire that lighted up the whole room brightly, glowing on the crimson curtains of the bed and the crimson hangings of the windows opposite, and flashing up on the high mirror between them.

Capitola having secured her room in every way, stood before her dressing bureau and began to take off her collar, under-sleeves, and other small articles of dress. As she stood there, her mirror, brilliantly lighted up by both lamp and fire, reflected clearly the opposite bed, with its warm crimson curtains, white coverlet, and little Pitapat fitting from top to post, as the tied back the curtains or smoothed the sheets.

Capitola stood unclasping her bracelets, and smiling to herself at the reflected picture—the comfortable nest in which she was so soon to curl herself up in sleep. While she was smiling thus, she tilted the mirror downwards a little for her better convenience, and looking into it again:

Horror! what did she see reflected there? Under the bed a pair of glittering eyes, watching her from the shadows.

A sick sensation of fainting came over her; but mastering the weakness, she tilted the glass a little lower, until it reflected all the floor, and looked again.

Horror on horrors! there were three stalwart ruffians armed to the teeth, lurking in ambush under her bed.

The deadly inclination to swoon returned upon her; but with a heroic effort she controlled her fears, and forced herself to look.

Yes, there they were! It was no dream, no illusion, no nightmare—there they were, three powerful desperadoes, armed with bowie knives and revolvers, the nearest one crouching low and watching her with his wolfish eyes, that shone like phosphorus in the dark.

What should she do? The danger was extreme, the necessity of immediate action imminent, the need of perfect self-control absolute. There was thing! There! she saw the bed in momentary danger of looking under it. If she should, their lives would not be worth an instant's purchase. Their throats would be cut before they should utter a second scream. It was necessary, therefore, to call Pitapat away from the bed, where her presence was as dangerous as the proximity of a lighted candle to an open powder-barrel.

But how to turn her voice to do this? A single quaver in her tones would betray her consciousness of their presence to the lurking robbers and prove instantly fatal.

Happily, Capitola's pride in her own courage came to her aid.

"Is it possible," she said to herself, "that, after all, I am a coward and have not even nerve and will enough to command the tones of my own voice. Fie on it! Cowardice is worse than death."

And summoning all her resolution she spoke up, gibbly:

"Pitapat, come here and unhook my dress."

"Yes, Miss, I will just as soon as I get your slippers from underneath of do bed."

"I don't want them! Come here this minute and unhook my dress, I can't breathe! Plague take these country dressmakers, they think the tighter they screw one up the more fashionable they make one appear! Come, I say, and set my lunge at liberty."

"Yes, miss, in one minute," said Pitapat; and to Capitola's unspeakable horror the little maid stooped down and felt along under the side of the bed, from the head post to the foot post, until she put her hands upon the slippers and brought them forth. Providentially, the poor little wretch had not for an instant put her stupid head under the bed, or used her eyes in the

search!—that was all that saved them from instant massacre.

"Here dey is, Caterpillar! I knows how yer foots mus' be as much out of bread yit yer tight gaiters as your waise is long of yer tight dress."

"Uahook me!" said Capitola, tilting up the glass lest the child should see what horrors were reflected there.

The little maid began to obey, and Capitola tried to think of some plan to escape their imminent danger. To obey the natural impulse—to fly from the room would be instantly fatal! they would be followed and murdered in the hall, before they could possibly give the alarm. And to whom could she give the alarm when there was not another creature in the house except Mrs. Condiment?

While she was turning these things over in her mind it occurred to her that "man's extremity is God's opportunity." Sending up a silent prayer to heaven for help at need, she suddenly thought of a plan—it was full of difficulty, uncertainty and peril, affording not one chance in fifty of success, yet the only possible plan of escape. It was to find some plausible pretext for leaving the room without exciting suspicion, which would be fatal. Controlling her tremors, and speaking cheerfully, she asked:

"Do you know whether there were any of those nice quines' texts left from dinner?"

"Lor! yes, Miss, a heap on 'em. Ole Miss put 'em away in her cupboard."

"Was there any baked custard left?"

"Lors, yes, Miss Caterpillar! dere was nobdy but we-dens three, and think I could eat up all as was left?"

"I don't know but you might. Well, is there any pear-sauce?"

"Yess, Miss, a big bowl full."

"Well, I wish you'd go down and bring me up a tart, a cup of custard and a spoonful of pear-sauce. Sitting up so late makes me as hungry as a wolf. Come, Paddy, go along."

"Deed, Miss, Ise 'frail!' whispered the little maid.

"Afraid of what, you goose!"

"'Fraid of meeting a ghose in the dark places."

"Pooh! you can take the light with you. I can stay here in the dark well enough."

"Deed, Miss, Ise 'frail!' said the maid.

"What! with the candle, you blockhead?"

"Lors, Miss, de candle w'dn't be no 'fection. I'd see de ghoses all de plain w'd de candle!"

"What a provoking, stupid dolt! you're a proper maid! afraid to do my bidding! afraid of ghoses, forsooth. Well! I suppose I shall have to go myself; plague on you for an aggravating said Capitola, in a tone of impatience.

Pitapat took up the light, and stood ready to accompany her mistress. Capitola, humming a gay tune, went to the door and unlocked and opened it.

She wished to withdraw the key, so as to lock it on the other side and secure the robbers and insure the safety of her own retreat; but to do this without betraying her purpose and destroying her own life seemed next to impossible. Still singing gaily she ran over in her mind with the quickness of lightning every possible means by which she might withdraw the key silently, or without attracting the attention of the watching robbers. It is difficult to say what she should have done, had not chance instantly favored her.

At the same moment that she unlocked and opened the door, and held the key in her hand, fearful of withdrawing it, Pitapat, who was hurrying after her with the candle, tripped and fell against a chair, with a great noise, under cover of which Capitola drew forth the key.

Scolding and pushing Pitapat out before her, she closed the door with a bang; with the quickness of lightning she slipped the key in the key-hole, and turned the lock—covering the whole with loud and angry railing against poor Pitapat, who silently wondered at this unhappy change in her mistress's temper, but ascribed it all to hunger, desiring to be herself.

"Ise often horn tell how people's cross when dere empty! Lors knows of I don't fetch up a whole heap o' vittles every night for Miss Caterpillar from dis time fofed, so I will, 'deed me!"

So they went on through the long passages and empty rooms, Capitola carefully looking every

door behind her, until she got down stairs into the great hall.

"Now, Miss Caterpillar, if you wants quiet dark, an' 'pear sass, and baked custard, an' all dem, you'll just have to go an' wake Ole Miss up; case dey's in her cupboard an' she's got the keys," said Pitapat.

"Never mind, Paddy, you follow me," said Capitola, going to the front hall-door, and beginning to unlock it and take down the bars and withdraw the bolts.

"Lors, Miss, what is yer addin' of?" asked the little maid, in wonder, as Capitola opened the door and looked out.

"I am going out a little way and you must go with me."

"Deed, Miss, I'm 'frail!"

"Very well, then; stay here in the dark until I come back, but don't go to my room, because you might meet a ghose on the way!"

"Oh, Miss, I daren't stay here—indeed I daren't!"

"Then you'll have to come along with me, and so no more about it," said Capitola, sharply, as she passed on from the door. The poor little maid followed, bemoaning the fate that bound her to so capricious a mistress.

Capitola drew the key from the hall-door and looked it on the outside. Then clasping her hands and raising her eyes to Heaven, she fervently ejaculated:

"Thank God! oh, thank God that we are safe!"

"Lors, Miss, we are in danger?"

"We are not now, but we may be. Pitapat. Come along," said Capitola, hurrying across the lawn towards the open fields.

"Oh, my goodness, Miss, where is yer goin' of?—don't less run so far from home dis lone-ome, wicked, unlawf'ul hour o' de night," whimpered the distressed little dorkie, fearing that her mistress was certainly crazed.

"Now, then, what are you afraid of?" asked Capitola, seeing her hold back.

"Lors, Miss, you knows—everybody knows—Brack Dannel!"

"Pitapat, come close, listen to me; don't scream—Black Donald and his men are up there at the house, in my chamber, under the bed," whispered Capitola.

Pitapat could not scream, for, though her mouth was wide open, her breath was quite gone. Shivering with fear, she kept close to her mistress's heels, as Capitola scampered over the fields.

A run of a quarter of a mile brought them to the edge of the woods, where, in its little garden, stood the over-seer's house.

Capitola opened the gate, hurried through the little front yard, and rattled loudly at the door.

This started the house dogs into furious barking, and brought old Mr. Ezy, with his night-capped head, to the window to see what was the matter.

"It is I, Capitola, Mr. Ezy—Black Donald and his men are lurking up at our house," said our young heroine, commencing in an eager and hurried voice, and giving the over-seer an account of the manner in which she had discovered the presence of the robbers and left the room without alarming them.

The old man heard with many cries of astonishment, ejaculations of prayer, and exclamations of thanksgiving! And all the while his head bobbing in and out of the window, as he pulled on his pantsloaves or buttoned his coat.

"And oh!" he said, at last as he opened the door to Capitola—"how providential that Mr. Herbert Greyson is arrive!"

"Herbert Greyson! Herbert Greyson arrive! Where is he then?" exclaimed Capitola, in surprise and joy.

"Yes, sarasin. Mr. Herbert arrive about an hour ago, and thinking you all were abed and asleep at the Hall, he just stopped in with us all night. I'll go and see, I doubt if he's gone to bed yet," said Mr. Ezy, withdrawing into the house.

"Oh, thank heaven! thank heaven!" exclaimed Capitola, just as the door opened and Herbert sprang forward to meet her with a—

"Dear Capitola! I am so glad to come to see you."

"Dear Herbert! just fancy you have said that a hundred times over, and that I have replied to the same words a hundred times—for we haven't a moment to spare," said Capitola, shaking his

all she got down stairs late

platter, of you want quiet
and baked sunset, an' all
to go an' wake Old Min' up;
and an' she's got the keys,

ity, you follow me," said
from hall-door, and begin-
take down the bars and

you ain't off?" asked the
as, Capitola opened the

little way and you must
wait."

my hero in the dark until
go to my room, because
on the way!"

"I'll stay here—indeed I
won't."

to come along with me,
said Capitola, sharply,
the door. The poor little
ing the fate that bound

by from the hall-door and
eyes. Then clasping her
to Heaven, she fer-

ank God that we are safe!"
in danger?"

hurry, Pilapat. Come
rushing across the lawn

Miss, where is you again?
far from home die lone-
mour o' de night," whim-

to dark, fearing that
to break,

you afraid of?" asked
back.

back—everybody knows—
ten to me; don't scream
my room are up there at
under the bed," whis-

cream, for, though her
her breath was quite
ear, she kept close to her
sola scampered over the

a mile brought them to
in, in his little garden,
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he, hurried through the
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Herbert Greyson arrived;
ained Capitola, in sur-

Herbert arrows about an
you all were dead and

stopped in with us all
backing in he's gone to bed
drawing into the lounge.

"Thank heaven!" exclaim
open and Herbert

with a
so glad to come to see

ney you have said that
that I have replied to
times—for we haven't

Capitola, shaking his

hands, and then, in an eager, vehement manner,
recounting the discovery and escape from the rob-
bers whom she had locked up in the house.

"Oh, now," she said, in conclusion, "and help
Me, Eay, to rouse up and run the farm hands, and
come immediately to the house! I am in an
anxious lest my prolonged absence should excite the
robbers' suspicion of my race, and that they
should break out and perhaps murder poor Mr.
Conditment. Her situation is awful, if she did not
know it! For the love of mercy hasten!"

Not an instant more of time was lost. Mr. Eay
and Herbert Greyson, accompanied by Capitola
and Patty, hurried at once to the negro quarters,
rattled up and armed the men with whatever was
at hand, and enjoining them to be as stealthy as
cats in their approach, set out swiftly for the Hall,
where they soon arrived.

"Take off your shoes, and walk lightly in
your stocking feet—do not speak—do not breathe
—follow me as silent as death," said Herbert Grey-
son, as he softly unlocked the front door and en-
tered the house.

Silently and stealthily they passed through the
middle hall, up the broad staircase, and through
the long narrow passages and steep stairs that
led to Capitola's remote chamber.

There at the door they paused awhile to
listen.

All was still within.

Herbert Greyson unlocked the door, withdrew
the key, and opened it and entered the room,
followed by all the men. He had scarcely time
to close the door, when the robbers, finding
themselves surprised, burst out from their hiding-
place and made a rush for the passage; but their
means of escape had been already cut off by the
forthright of Herbert Greyson.

A sharp conflict ensued.

Upon first being summoned to surrender, the
robbers responded by a hailstorm of bullets from
their revolvers, followed instantly by a clanging
of bowie-knives. This was met by an avalanche of
blows from pick-axes, pokers, pitchforks, sledg-
hammers, spades and hammers, beneath which the
miscreants were quickly beaten down and over-
whelmed.

They were then set upon and bound with strong
ropes brought for the purpose by Mr. Eay.

When they were thus secured hand and foot,
Capitola, who had been a spectator of the whole
scene, and exposed as much as any other to the
rattle of the bullets, now approached and looked
at the vanquished.

Black Donald certainly was not one of the party,
who were no other than the old and old acquaintances,
Hal, Steve, and Dick of the band.

Each burglar was conveyed to a separate apart-
ment, and a strong guard set over him.

Then Herbert Greyson, who had received a
flesh wound in his left arm, returned to the scene
of the conflict to look after the wounded. Several
of the negroes had received gun-shot wounds of
more or less importance. Eians were speedily
attended to. Mrs. Conditment, who had slept se-
curely through all the flit, was now awakened
by Capitola, and cautiously informed of what had
taken place, and assured that all danger was now
over.

The worthy woman, as soon as she recovered
from the consternation into which this news had
plunged her, at once set about recovering the
wounded. Cots and mattresses were made up in
one of the empty rooms, and bandages and bal-
sams prepared.

And not until all who had been hurt were made
comfortable, did Herbert Greyson throw himself
upon horseback and ride off to the county-seat to
summon the authorities, and to inform Major
Warfield of what had happened.

No one thought of retiring to bed at Hurricane
Hall that night.

Mrs. Conditment, Capitola and Patty sat watch-
ing by the bedside of the wounded.

Bill Eay and the men who had escaped injury
mounted guard over the prisoners.

Thus they all remained until sunrise, when the
major, attended by the deputy sheriff and half a
dozen constables, arrived. The night ride of
dozen miles had not sufficed to modify the fury
into which Old Hurricane had been thrown by the
news Herbert Greyson had aroused him from
sleep to communitate. He reached Hurricane
Hall in a state of excitement that his fanaticism

was characterized as "boiling." But "in the
very hottest, tempest and whirlwind of his pas-
sion," he remembered that to all the vanquish-
ed, wounded and bound was unmanly, and so he
did not trust himself to see or speak to the pris-
oners.

They were placed in a wagon and under a
strong escort of constables, were conveyed by the
deputy-sheriff to the county seat, where they were
securely lodged in jail.

But Old Hurricane's emotions of one sort or
another were a treat to see! He bemoaned the
sufferings of the poor wounded men, he raved
at the danger to which his "women-kind" had
been exposed, and he exulted in the heroism of
Capitola, catching her up in his arms and crying
out:

"Oh, my dear Cap, I my heroine I my queen I
and it was you against whom I was plotting
treason I'm sorry that I was! you that have saved
my house from pillage and my people from
starvation! Oh, Cap, what a jewel you are, my
dear!"

To all of which Capitola, extricating her curly
head from his embrace, cried only:

"Better."

Utterly refusing to be made a licence of, and
firmly rejecting the grand triumph

The next day Major Warfield went up to the
county seat to attend the examination of the
three burglars, whom he had the satisfaction of
seeing fully committed to prison to await their
trial at the next term of the criminal court, which
would not be until October, consequently the
prisoners had the prospect of remaining in jail
some months, which Old Hurricane declared to
be "some satisfaction."

CHAPTER XXVII.

SEEKING HIS FORTUNE.

A wide future smiles before him

His heart will beat for fame.

As he will learn to wrestle with love

The music of a nation

With on the tablets of his heart

Is characters of fame—MANNOR

When the winter's course of medical lectures
at the Washington College was over, late in the
spring, Traverse Rocke returned to Willow
Hedge.

The good doctor gave him a glad welcome,
congratulating him upon his improved appearance,
and manly bearing.

Clara received him with blushing pleasure, and
Marah Rocke with all the mother's love for her
only child.

He quickly fell into the old pleasant routine of
his country life, resumed his arduous studies in
the doctor's office, his work in the flower garden,
and his morning rides and evening talk with the
doctor's lovely child.

Not the least obstacle was set in the way of his
association with Clara; yet Traverse grew
stronger and wiser than his years would seem to
promise, controlled both his feelings and his ac-
tions, and never departed from the most respect-
ful reserve, or suffered himself to be drawn into
that dangerous familiarity to which their constant
companionship might tempt him.

Marah Rocke, with maternal pride, witnessed
his constant self-control, and encouraged him to
persevere. Often in the enthusiasm of her heart,
when they were alone, she would throw her arm
around him, and push the thick clustering curls
from his fine forehead, and gazing fondly on his
face exclaim:

"That is my noble-hearted boy. Oh, Traverse,
God will bless you. He only tries you now to
persecute."

Traverse always understood these vague words,
and would return her embrace with all his boyish
ardour, and say:

"God bless me now, mother. He blesses
me so much, in so many, many ways, that I
should be worse than a heathen not to be willing
to bear cheerfully one trial."

And so Traverse would "reek his own read,"
and cultivate cheerful gratitude as a duty to God
and man.

Clara, also, now, with her feminine intuition,
comprehended her reserved lover, honored the
motives, and rested satisfied with being so deeply

loved, trusting all their unknown future to heaven.

The doctor's appreciation and esteem for Tra-
verse increased with every new unfolding of the
youth's heart and intellect, and never did master-
tain more pains with a favorite pupil, or father
with a beloved son, than did the doctor to push
Traverse on in his profession. The improvement of
the youth was truly surprising.

This passed the summer in healthful alterna-
tion of study and exercise.

When the season waned, late in the autumn
he went a second time to Washington to attend
the winter's course of lectures at the Medical
College.

The doctor gave him letters recommending
him as a young man of extraordinary talents and
of excellent moral character, to the particular at-
tention of several of the most eminent professors.

His mother bore the second parting with more
cheerfulness, especially as the separation was
enriched by frequent letters from Traverse, full
of the history of the present and the hopes of the
future.

The doctor did not forget from time to time to
keep the unassuming but his friends, the professors
of the medical college, they might afford him
protection every facility and assistance in the pro-
secution of his studies.

Towards spring Traverse wrote to his friends
that his hopes were sanguine of obtaining his
diploma at the examination to be held at the end
of the season. And when Traverse expressed
this hope, they who knew so well how well he
deserved it, had made no vain boast.

And so it proved, for early in April Traverse
Rocke returned home with a diploma in his
pocket.

Succumb was the joyful sympathy that met him.
The doctor shook him cordially by the hands,
declaring that he was the first student he ever
knew to get his diploma at the end of only three
years' study.

Clara, amid smiles and blushes, congratulated
him.

And Mrs. Rocke, as soon as she had him alone,
threw her arms around his neck and wept for joy.

A few days Traverse gave up solely to enjoy
ment of his friends' society, and then growing
restless, he began to talk of opening an office
and hanging out a sign in Staunton.

He consulted the doctor upon this subject.
The good doctor heard him out, and then earnestly
his own chin and looking over the tops of his
spectacles, with good humored satire, he said:

"My dear boy, you have confidence enough in
me by this time to bear that I should speak plain-
ly to you?"

"Oh, Doctor Day, just say whatever you like,"
replied the young man, fervently.

"Very well, then, I shall speak very plainly—
to wit: you'll never succeed in Staunton—no,
not if you had the genius of Galen and Escula-
pius, Aesculapius, and Benjamin Rush put to-
gether."

"My dear sir, why?"

"Because, my son, it is written that 'a proph-
et hath no honor in his own city!' Of our
blessed Lord and Saviour the contemptuous Jews
said: 'Is not this Jesus, the carpenter's son?'"

"Oh, I understand you, sir," said Traverse,
with a deep blush, "you mean that the people
who used some years ago to employ me to put in
their coal and saw their wood and run their
errands, will never trust me to look at their
tongues and feel their pulses and write prescrip-
tions."

"That's it, my boy: you've defined the diffi-
culty. And now I'll tell you what you are to do,
Traverse—you must go to the West, my lad."

"Go to the West, sir! leave my mother! leave
you! leave—"

He hesitated, and blushed.

"Clara? Yes, my son; you must go to
the West, leave your mother, leave me and leave
Clara! it will be best for all parties. We man-
aged to live without our lad, when he was away
at his studies in Washington, and we will try to
dispense with him longer if it be for his own
good."

"Ah, sir, but then absence had a limitation,
and the hope of return sweetened every day that
passed; but if I go to the West to settle, it will
be without the remotest hope of returning!"

"Not so, my boy—not so; for just as soon as

Doctor Rooke has established himself in some thriving Western town, and obtained a good practice, gained a high reputation and made himself a home—which, as he is a fast young man in the best sense of the phrase, he can do in a very few years—he may come back here and carry to his Western home—his mother," said the doctor, with a mischievous twinkle of his eyes.

"Doctor Day, I owe you more than a son's honor and obedience. I will go wherever you think it best that I should," said Traversé earnestly.

"No more than I expected from all my previous knowledge of you, Traversé. And I, on my part, will give you only such counsel as I should give my own son, had Heaven blessed me with one. And now, Traversé, there is no better point to stop and make observations at than St. Louis. Of course, the place of your final destination must be left for future consideration. I have influential friends at St. Louis to whom I will give you letters."

"Dear sir, to have matured this plan so well you must have been kindly thinking of my future this long time past," said Traversé, gratefully.

"Of course! of course! Who has a better right! Now go and break this plan to your mother."

Traversé pressed the doctor's hand and went to seek his mother. He found her in his room busy among his clothing. He begged her to stop and sit down while he talked to her. And when she had done so, he told her the doctor's plan. He had almost feared that his mother would meet this proposition with sighs and tears.

To his surprise and pleasure, Mrs. Rooke, received the news with an encouraging smile, telling him that the doctor had long prepared her to expect that her boy would very properly go and establish himself in the West; that she should correspond with him frequently, and as soon as he should be settled, come and keep house for him.

Finally she said that, anticipating this emergency, she had, during her three years' residence beneath the doctor's roof, saved three hundred dollars, which she should give her boy to start him.

The tears rushed to the young man's eyes. "For your dear sake, mother, only for yours, may they become three hundred thousand in my hands," he exclaimed.

Preparations were immediately commenced for Traversé's journey.

As before, Clara gladly gave her aid in getting ready his wardrobe. As he was about to make his debut as a young physician in a strange city, his mother was anxious that his dress should be faultless, and therefore put the most delicate needle-work upon all the little articles of his outfit. Clara volunteered to mark them all. And one day, when Traversé happened to be alone with his mother, she showed him his bankbooks, collars and linen beautifully marked in minute embroidered letters.

"I suppose, Traversé, that you being a young man, cannot appreciate the exquisite beauty of this work," she said.

"Indeed but I can, mother. I did not sit by your side so many years while you worked without knowing something about it. This is wonderful. The golden thread with which the letters are embroidered is finer than the finest silk I ever saw," said Traversé, admiringly, to please his mother, whom he supposed to be the embroiderer.

"Well they may be," said Mrs. Rooke, "for that golden thread of which you speak is Clara's golden hair, which she herself has drawn out and threaded her needle with, and worked into the letters of your name."

Traversé suddenly looked up, his color went and came; he had no words to reply.

"I told you because I thought it would give you pleasure to know it, and that it would be a comfort to you when you are far away from us; for Traversé, I hope that by this time you will be grown strong and wise enough to have conquered yourself, and to enjoy dear Clara's friendship aright!"

"Mother," he said, sorrowfully, and then his voice broke down, and without another word he turned and left the room.

To feel how deeply and hopelessly he loved the doctor's sweet daughter—to feel sure that she perceived and returned his dumb, despairing love—and to know that duty, gratitude, honor, comfort from her and make no sister's integrity. Scarcely could he prevent the internal struggle betraying itself upon his countenance. As the time drew near for his departure self-control grew difficult and almost impossible. Even Clara lost her joyful spirits, and despite all her efforts to be cheerful, grew so pensive she could hardly seem to understand that her father without seeming to understand the cause, gaily rallied her upon her dejection.

Traversé understood it and almost longed for the day to come when he should leave this scene of his love and sore trial.

One afternoon, a few days before he was to start, Doctor Day sent for Traversé to come to him in his study. And as soon as they were seated comfortably together at the table, the doctor put into the young man's hand a small filled pocket-book; and when Traversé, with a deep and painful blush, would have given it back, he forced it upon him with the old argument:

"It is only a loan my boy. Money put out at interest. Capital well and satisfactorily invested. And now listen to me. I am about to speak to you of that which is much nearer your heart—"

Traversé became painfully embarrassed.

"Traversé," resumed the doctor, "I have grown to love you as a son, and to esteem you as a man. I have lived long enough to value solid integrity far beyond wealth or birth, and when that integrity is adorned and enriched by high talents, it forms a character of excellence not often met with in this world. I have proved both your integrity and your talents, Traversé, and I am more than satisfied with you; I am proud of you my boy."

Traversé bowed deeply, but still blushed.

"You will wonder," continued the doctor, "to what all this talk tends. I will tell you, Traversé. I have long known your unspoken love for Clara, and I have honored your scruples in keeping silent, when silence must have been so painful. Your trial is now over, my son. Go and open for yourself an honorable career in the profession you have chosen and mastered, and return, and Clara shall be yours."

Traversé, overwhelmed with surprise and joy at this incredible good fortune, seized the doctor's hand, and in wild and incoherent language tried to express his gratitude.

"There, there," said the doctor, "go and tell Clara all this, and bring the roses back to her cheeks, and then your parting will be the happier for this hope before you."

"I must speak. I must speak first," said the young man, in a choking voice. "I must tell you some little of the deep gratitude I feel for you, sir. Oh! when I forget all that you have done for me, may my right hand forget her cunning! may God and man forget me! Doctor Day, the Lord helping me for your good sake, I will be all that you have prophesied and hope and expect of me. For your sake, for Clara's and my mother's, I will bend every power of my mind, soul and body to attain the eminence you desire for me. In a word, the Lord giving me grace, I will become worthy of being your son and Clara's husband."

"There, there, my dear boy, go and tell Clara all that," said the doctor, pressing the young man's hand and dismissing him.

Traversé went immediately to seek Clara, whom he found sitting alone in the parlor.

She was bending over some delicate needle-work that Traversé knew by instinct was intended for him.

Now, had Traversé foreseen from the first the success of his love, there might possibly have been the usual shyness and hesitation in declaring himself to the object of his affection. But although he and Clara had long deeply and silently loved and understood each other, yet neither had dared to hope for so improbable an event as the doctor's favoring their attachment, and now, under the exalting influence of the surprise, joy and gratitude with which the doctor's magnanimity had filled his heart, Traversé forgot all shyness and hesitation, and stepping quickly to Clara's side, and dropping gently upon one knee, he took her hand, and bowing his head upon it, said:

"Clara, my own, own Clara! your dear father has given me leave to tell you at last how much and how long I have loved you," and then he arose and sat down beside her.

The blush deepened upon Clara's cheek, tears filled her eyes, and her voice trembled as she murmured:

"Heaven bless my dear father! He is unlike every other man on earth."

"Oh, he is! he is!" said Traversé, fervently,—"and, dear Clara, never did I cease to strive so hard for wealth, fame, or glory, as I shall strive to become 'worthy to be called his son.'"

"Do Traversé, do dear Traversé. I want you to honor even his very highest drafts upon your moral and intellectual capacities. I know you are 'worthy' of his high regard now, else he never would have chosen you as his son—but I am ambitious for you Traversé. I would have your motto be—'Excelsior! higher!'" said the doctor's daughter.

"And you dear Clara, may I venture to hope that you do not disapprove of your father's choice or reject his hand that he permits me to offer you?" said Traversé, with a deep blush. Clara well enough, yet like all honest men, he wanted some definite and practical engagement.

"There is my hand, my heart was yours long ago," murmured the maiden in a tremulous voice. He took and pressed that white hand to his bosom, looked hesitatingly and pleadingly in her face for an instant—then drawing her gently to his bosom, sealed their betrothal on her pure lips.

Then they sat side by side, and hand in hand in a sweet silence for a few moments, and then Clara said:

"You have not told your mother yet. Go and tell her, Traversé; it will make her so happy, and, Traversé, I will let a daughter to her, while you are gone. Tell her that, too."

"Dear girl, you have always been as kind and loving to my mother as it was possible to be—how can you ever be more so than you have been?"

"I shall find a way," smiled Clara.

Again he pressed her hand to his heart and to his lips, and left the room to find his mother. He had a search before he discovered her at last in the drawing-room, arranging it for their evening friends gathering.

"Come, mother, and sit down by me on this sofa, for I have glorious tidings for your ear. Dear Clara sent me from her own side to tell you."

"Ah! still thinking, always thinking, maddening thinking, of the doctor's daughter. 'Poor, poor boy!'" said Mrs. Rooke.

"Yes! and always intend to think of her to the very end of my life, and beyond, if possible. But come, dear mother, and hear me explain," said Traversé; and as soon as Mrs. Rooke had taken the indicated seat, Traversé commenced and related to her the substance of the conversation between the doctor and himself in the library, in which the former authorized his addresses to his daughter, and also his own subsequent explanation and engagement with Clara.

Mrs. Rooke listened to all this, in unbroken silence, and when, at length, Traversé had concluded his story, she clasped her hands and raised her eyes, uttering fervent thanksgivings to the fountain of all mercies.

"You do not congratulate me, dear mother."

"Oh, Traversé! I am returning thanks to Heaven on your behalf. Oh, my son! my son! but that such things as these are Providential, I should tremble to see you so happy. So I will not presume to congratulate. I will pray for you."

"Dear mother, you have suffered so much in your life, that you are incredulous of happiness. Be more hopeful and confiding. The Bible says: 'There remaineth now these three, Faith, Hope, and Charity.' Now have Charity enough, dear mother; try to have Faith and Hope, and you will be happier. And look; there is Clara coming this way; she does not know that we are here. I will call her. Dear Clara, come in and convince my mother; she will not believe in our happiness," said Traversé, going to the door and leading his blushing and smiling betrothed into the room.

"It may be that Mrs. Rooke does not want me for a daughter-in-law," said Clara, archly, as she approached and put her hand in that of Clara.

"Not want you, my own darling," said Clara.

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in that of March.
singing," said Marah

Roche, putting her arm around Clara's waist, and
drawing her to her bosom; "not want you.
You know I am just as much in love with you as
Traverse himself can be. And I have longed for
you, my sweet, longed for you as an unattainable
bleasing, ever since that day when Traverso first
left us, and you came and laid your bright head
on my bosom and wept with me."

"And now if we must cry a little when Traverso
leaves us, we can go and take comfort in being
miserable together, with a better understanding of
our relations," said Clara, with an arch smile.

"Where are you all?—where is everybody?—that
I am left wandering about the lonely house like a
poor ghost in Hades?" said the doctor's cheerful
voice in the passage without.

"Here father! here we are! a family party
wanting only you to complete it," answered his
daughter, springing to meet him.

The doctor came in smiling, pressed his daughter
to his bosom, shook Traverso cordially by the
hand, and kissed Marah Roche's cheek. That
was his way of congratulating himself and all
others on the betrothal.

The evening was passed in unalloyed happiness.
Let them enjoy it. It was their last of comfort
—that bright evening.

Over that household was already gathering a
cloud heavy and dark with calamity—calamity
that must have overwhelmed the stability of any
family which was not as theirs—stayed upon
God.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

A PANIC IN THE OUTLANDS' DEN.

Imagination fancies events unknown.
In wild, fantastic shapes of business rules.
And what it fears creates!—HANNAN MORRIS.
Dark doubt and fears, o'er other spirits lower,
But touch no folk who every waking hour,
Has one fixed hope and always feels its power.
—CRABBE

Upon the very same night, that the three rob-
bers were surprised and captured by the pre-
sence of mind of Capitola at Hurricane Hall,
Black Donald, disguised as a negro, was lurking
in the woods around the mansion, waiting for
the coming of the three men with their prize.

But as hour after hour passed, and they came
not, the desperado began heartily to curse their
slowness—for to no other cause was he enabled to
attribute the delay, as he knew the house, the
deserted scene of the outrage, to be deserted by
all for the night, except by the three helpless
females.

As night waned and morning began to dawn
in the East, the chief grew seriously uneasy at
the prolonged absence of his agents—a circum-
stance that he could only account for upon the
absurd hypothesis that those stupid brutes had
unfired themselves to be overtaken by sleep in
their ambush.

While he was cursing their inefficiency, and
regretting that he himself had not made one of
the party, he wandered in his restlessness to
another part of the woods, on the opposite side of
the house.

He had not been long here before his atten-
tion was arrested by the trampling of approach-
ing horsemen. He withdrew into the shade of
theicket, and listened while the travellers
went by.

The party proved to consist of Old Hurricane,
Herbert Greyson, and the sheriff's officers, on
their way from the town to Hurricane Hall, to
take the captured burglars into custody. And
Black Donald, by listening attentively, gathered
enough from their conversation, to know that his
man had been discovered and captured by the
heroism of Capitola.

"That girl again!" muttered Black Donald to
himself. "She is doomed to be my destruction,
or I hers. Our fates are evidently connected!
Poor Steve! poor Dick! poor Hal! Little did I
think that your devotion to your captain would
carry you into the very jaws of death!"
Palnau! hang it! let boys and women whine. I
must act!"

And with this resolution Black Donald de-
scended the path of the horsemen until he had
reached that part of the woods skirting the
road opposite the park gate. Here he hid him-
self in the bushes to watch events. Soon from

his hiding-place he saw the waggon approach,
containing the three men, heavily armed and
escorted by a strong guard of county constables
and plantation negroes, all well armed and
under the command of the Sheriff and Herbert
Greyson.

"Ha, ha, ha! they must dread an attempt on
our part of rescue, or they never would think of
putting such a formidable guard over three
wounded and handcuffed men!" laughed Black
Donald to himself.

"Courage, my boys," he muttered. "Your
chief will free you from prison or share your
captivity! I wish I could trumpet that into your
ears at this moment, but prudence, the better
part of valor, forbids, for the same words that
would encourage you, would warn your captors
into greater vigilance." And so saying, Black
Donald let the procession pass, and then made
tracks for his retreat.

It was broad daylight when he reached the Old
Inn. The robbers, worn out with waiting and
watching for their captain and his men with the
fair prize, had thrown themselves down upon the
kitchen floor, and now lay in every sort of
awkward attitude, stretched out or doubled up in
heavy sleep. The old beldame had disappeared
—thatless she had long since sought her night
slumber.

Taking a poker from the corner of the fire-
place, Black Donald went around among the
sleeping robbers and stirred them up, with vigor-
ous punches in the ribs and cries of—

"Wake up! dolt! brutes! blockheads! wake
up! You rest on a volcano about to break out!
You sleep over a mine about to be exploded!
Wake up! disregard that you are! Your town is
taken! Your castle is stormed! The enemy is
at your throats with drawn swords! Ah, brutes!
will you wake them! or shall I have to lay out
harder?"

"What the demon!"

"How now?"

"What's this?" were some of the ejaculations
of the men, who slowly and sulkily roused
themselves from their heavy slumber.

"The house is on fire; the ship's sinking; the
cars have half off the track; the boiler's burst;
and the devil's to pay," cried Black Donald,
accompanying his words with vigorous punches
near the eyes.

"What the foul fiend ails you, Captain? Have
you got the girl and drink too much liquor on
your wedding night?" asked one of the men.

"No, Mac, I have not got the girl. On the
contrary, the girl, blame her, has got three of my
best men in custody. In one word, Hal, Dick
and Steve are safely lodged in the county jail."

"Perdition!"

"My eye!"

"Here's a go!" were the simultaneous excla-
mations of the men as they sprang up on their
feet.

"In the fiend's name, Captain, tell us all about
it," said Mac, anxiously.

"I have no time to talk much, nor you to tarry
long. It was all along of that blamed witch,
Capitola," said Black Donald, who then gave a
rapid account of the adventure, and the manner
in which Capitola entrapped and captured the
burglars, together with the way in which he him-
self came by the information.

"I must admit one can't help liking that girl. I
should admire her, even if she should put a rope
about my neck," said Mac.

"She's a brick," said another, with emphasis.

"She's some punkins, now, I tell you," assent-
ed a third.

"I am more than ever resolved to get her into
my possession. But in the meantime, tads, we
hold us."

"Aye, Captain!"

"Aye, but listen! we must talk fast, and act
promptly! the poor fellows up there in jail are
game, I know. They would not willingly peach;
but they are badly wounded; if one of them should
be taken to bed, and be blessed with a psalm-singing
person to attend him, no knowing but what he may
be persuaded to confess. Therefore, let us quick-
ly decide upon some new rendezvous that will
be unsuspected, even by our poor caged birds.
If any of you have any place in your eye, speak."

"We would rather hear what you have to say,
Captain," said Mac; and all the rest assented.

"Well, then, you all know the Devil's Punch
Bowl."

"Are, do we, Captain?"

"Well, what you do not know I what nobody
knows but myself is this—that about half way
down that awful chasm, in the side of the rock, is
a hole, concealed by a clump of evergreens; that
hole is the entrance to a cavern of enormous ex-
tent—let that be our next rendezvous. And now,
about 11 o'clock, scatter! and meet me in the cavern
to-night, at the usual hour. Listen—carry away
all our arms, ammunition, disguises, and provisions
—so that no vestige of our presence may be left
behind. As for dummy, if they can make her
speak, the cutting out of her tongue was lost
labor!—vanish!"

"But our pals in prison," said Mac.

"They shall be my care. We must lie low for
a few days, so as to put the authorities off their
guard; then if our pals recover from their wounds,
and have proved game against Church and State,
I shall know what measures to take for their de-
liverance. No more talk now! prepare for your
fitting and fly!"

The captain's orders were obeyed, and within
two hours from that time no vestige of the rob-
bers' presence remained in the deserted old inn.
If any sheriff's officer had come there to make a
search warrant, he would have found nothing sus-
picious; he would have seen only a poor old dumb
woman, busy at her spinning-wheel; and if he had
questioned her, would only have got smiles and
shakes of the head for an answer; or the exhibi-
tion of coarse country gloves and stockings of her
own knitting, which she would, in dumb-show, beg
him to purchase.

Days and weeks passed, and the three impris-
oned burglars languished in jail, each in a separ-
ate cell.

Bitterly each in his heart complained of the
leader that had, apparently, deserted them in their
direst need. And if neither betrayed him, it was
probably because they could not do so with-
out deeply criminating themselves, and for no
better motive.

There is said to be "honor among thieves." It
is, on the face of it, untrue; there can be neither
honor, confidence, nor safety among men whose
profession is crime. The burglars, therefore,
had no confidence in their leader, and accord-
ingly reproached him for his desertion of them.

Meanwhile the annual camp-meeting season
approached. It was rumored that a camp-meet-
ing would be held in the wooded vale below Tip
Top, and soon this report was confirmed by an-
nouncements in all the county papers, that all
who intended to take part in the religious festival
or have a tent on the ground, began to prepare
provisions—cooking meat and poultry, baking
bread, cakes, pies, etc. And preachers from all
parts of the country were flocking into the
village to be on the spot for the commencement.

Mrs. Conditment, though a member of another
church, loved in her soul the religious excitement
—the "warming up," as she called it, to be had
at the camp-meeting! But never in the whole
course of her life had she taken part in one, ex-
cept so far as riding to the preaching in the morn-
ing and returning home in the evening.

But Capitola, who was as general in the interval
between her adventures bored half to death with
the monotony of her life at Hurricane Hall, and
praying not against but wishing for—fire, floods
or plagues, or anything to stir her stagnant blood,
heard of the camp-meeting, and expressed a wish
to hasten to it on the camp ground and remain
there from the beginning to the end, to see all
that was to be seen; hear all that was to be heard;
feel all that was to be felt; and learn all that was
to be known.

And as Capitola, ever since her victory over the
burglars, had been the queen regnant of Hurri-
cane Hall, she had only to express this wish to
have it carried into immediate effect.

Old Hurricane himself went up to Tip Top and
purchased the canvas and set two men to work
under his own immediate direction to make the
tent.

And as Major Warfield's campaigning experi-
ence was very valuable here, it turned out that
the Hurricane Hall tent was the largest and best
on the camp ground. As soon as it was set up

under the shade of a grove of oak trees, a wagon from Hurricane Hall conveyed to the spot the simple and necessary furniture, cooking materials and provisions. And the same morning the family carriage, driven by Wool, brought out Major Warfield, Mrs. Condiment, Capitola and her little maid Patsy.

The large tent was divided into two compartments—one for Major Warfield and his man Wool—the other for Mrs. Condiment, Capitola and Patsy.

As the family party stepped out of the carriage, the novelty, freshness and beauty of the scene called forth a simultaneous burst of admiration. The little snow-white tents were dotted here and there through the woods, in beautiful contrast with the greenness of the foliage; groups of well-dressed and cheerful-looking men, women and children were walking about; over all smiled a morning sky of cloudless splendor. The preaching and the prayer-meetings had not yet commenced. Indeed, many of the brethren were hard at work in an extensive clearing, setting up a rude pulpit, and arranging rough benches to accommodate the women and children of the camp congregation.

Our party went into their tent, delighted with the novelty of the whole thing, though Old Hurricane declared that it was a thing new to his experience, but reminded him strongly of his campaigning days.

Wool assented, saying that the only difference was, there were no sentries in the old military camp.

I have neither time nor space to give a full account of this camp-meeting. The services commenced the same evening. There were preachers of more or less fervor of piety and eloquence of utterance. Old Christians had their "first love" revived; young ones found their soul kindled, and sinners were awakened to a sense of their sin and danger. Every Christian there said the season had been a good one.

In the height of the religious enthusiasm, there appeared a new preacher in the field. He seemed a man considerably past middle age, and broken down with sickness or sorrow. His figure was tall, thin and stooping, his hair white as snow, his face pale and emaciated, his movements slow and feeble, and his voice low and muffled. He wore a solemn suit of black, that made his thin form seem of skeleton proportions, a snow-white neckcloth, and a pair of great round iron-rimmed spectacles, that added nothing to his good looks.

Yet this old, sickly and feeble man seemed one of fervent piety and of burning eloquence. Every one sought his society; and when it was known that Father Gray was to hold forth, the whole camp congregation turned out to hear him. It must not be supposed that in the midst of this great revival, those poor "sinners above all sinners," the burglars imprisoned in the neighboring town were forgotten; no, they were remembered, prayed for, visited, and exhorted. And no one took more interest in the fate of these men than good Mrs. Condiment, who, having seen them all on that great night at Hurricane Hall, and having with her own kind hands plastered their heads and given them possets, could not drive out of her heart a certain compassion for their miseries.

No one, either, admired Father Gray more than did the little old housekeeper of Hurricane Hall, and as her table and her accommodations were the best on the camp-ground, she often invited and pressed good Father Gray to rest and refresh himself in her tent. And the old man, though a severe ascetic, yielded to her repeated solicitations, until at length he seemed to live there altogether.

One day Mrs. Condiment, being seriously exercised upon the subject of the imprisoned men, said to Father Gray, who was reposing himself in the tent:

"Father Gray, I wished to speak to you, sir, upon the subject of those poor wretched men, who are to be tried for their lives at the next term of the criminal court. Our ministers have all seen to see them, and talked to them, but not one of the number can make the least impression on them, or bring them to any sense of their awful condition."

"Ah! that is dreadful," sighed the aged man. "Yes, dreadful, Father Gray! Now I thought if you would only visit them, you can't surely bring them to reason."

"My dear friend, I would willingly do so, but I must confess to you a weakness, a great weakness of the flesh—I have a natural shrinking from men of blood. I know it is sinful, but indeed I cannot overcome it."

"But my dear Father Gray, a man of your experience knows full well that if you cannot overcome that feeling, you should act in direct opposition to it. And, I assure you, there is no danger. Why, even I should not be afraid of a robber when he is double-ironed and looked up in a cell, and I should enter guarded by a pair of turnkeys."

"I know it, my dear lady, I know it; and I feel that I ought to overcome this weakness or do my duty in its despite."

"Yes, and if you would consent to go, Father Gray, I would not mind going with you myself, if that would encourage you any."

"Of course it would, my dear friend; and if you will go with me, and if the brethren think that I could do any good, I will certainly endeavor to conquer my repugnance, and visit these imprisoned men."

It was arranged that Father Gray, accompanied by Mrs. Condiment, should go to the jail upon the following morning; and accordingly they set out immediately after breakfast. A short ride up centre of which was the jail. It was a simple structure of grey stone, containing within its own walls the apartments occupied by the warden. To these Mrs. Condiment, who was the leader in the whole matter, first presented herself, introducing Father Gray as one of the preachers of effective in his manner of dealing with hardened offenders.

"I have heard of the Reverend Mr. Gray, and his powerful exhortations," said the warden with a low bow; "and I hope he may be able to make some impression on these obdurate men, and induce them, if possible, to 'make a clean breast of it,' and give up the retreat of their brand. Each of them has been offered a free pardon on condition of turning State's evidence, and each has refused."

"Indeed; have they done so, case-hardened creatures?" mildly inquired Father Gray.

"Ay, have they! but you, dear sir, may be able to persuade them to do so."

"I shall endeavor—I shall endeavor," said the mild-fold man.

The warden then requested the visitors to follow him, and led the way up stairs to the cells.

"I understand that the criminals are confined separately," said Mr. Gray to the warden.

"No, sir; they were so confined at first, for better security; but as they have been a very quiet, and as since those rowdies that disturbed the camp-meeting have been sent to prison, and filled up our cells, we have had to put those three robbers into one cell."

"I'm afraid, I—" began the minister, hesitating.

"Father Gray is nervous, good Mr. Jailer; I hope there's no danger from those dreadful men—all of them together—for I promised Father Gray that he should be safe, myself," said Mrs. Condiment.

"Oh, ma'am, undoubtedly; they are double-ironed," said the warden, as he unlocked a door cell, in which were the three prisoners.

Steve, the mulatto, was stretched upon the floor in a deep sleep.

Hal was sitting on the side of the cot, twiddling his fingers.

Dick sat crouched up in a corner, with his head against the wall.

"Peace be with you, my poor souls," said the mild old man, as he entered the cell.

"You go to the demon!" said Dick, with a hideous scowl.

"Nay, my poor man, I came in the hope of saving you from that enemy of souls."

"Here's another! There's three comes reg'lar! here's the fourth! Go it, old fellow! We're gettin' used to it! It's gettin' to be entertaining! It's the only diversion we have in this blasted hole!" said Hal.

"Nay, friend, if you use profane language, I cannot stay to hear it," said the old man.

"Yan-aw-aw-ow!" yawned Steve, half rising and stretching himself. "What's the row? I was just dreaming our captain had come to deliver

us—yan-aw-aw-ow-oh! It's only another parson!" and with that Steve turned himself over and settled to sleep.

"My dear Mr. Jailer—do you think that these men are safe—for if you do, I think we had better leave except that Mr. Gray to talk to them alone—he can do them so much more good, if he has them all to himself," said Mrs. Condiment, who was, in spite of all her previous boasting, beginning to quail and tremble under the hideous glare of Demon Dick's eyes.

"N-no! n-no! n-no!" faltered the preacher, nervously taking out of the coat of the warden.

"You go along out of this! the whole on you. I'm not a wild beast in a cage to be stared at!" growled Demon Dick, with a baleful glare that sent Mrs. Condiment and the preacher, shuddering to the cell door.

Mr. Gray, I do assure you, sir, there is no danger! the men are double ironed, and malignant as they may be, they can do you no harm. And if you would stay and talk to them you might persuade them to confession and do the community much service," said the warden.

"I—I'm no coward! But—but—but—" faltered the old man, tremblingly approaching the prisoners.

"I understand you, sir. You are indeed health, which makes you nervous."

"Yes, yes, Heaven forgive me; but if you Mr. Jailer, and this good lady here, will keep within call, in case of accidents, I don't mind if I do read main and exhort these men, for a short time," said the old man.

"Of course you will. Come, Mrs. Condiment, mum! there's a good woman. Mrs. Condiment, I'll send for my old woman, and we three can have a good talk while the worthy Mr. Gray is speaking to the prisoners," said the warden, conducting the housekeeper from the cell.

As soon as they had gone, the old man went to the door and peeped after them, and having seen that they went to the extremity of the lobby to a seat under an open window, he turned back to the cell, and going up to Hal, said in a low voice:

"Now, then, is it possible that you do not know me?"

Hal stopped twiddling his fingers and looked up at the tall, thin, stooping figure, the gray hair, the white eyebrows and the pale face, and said gruffly:

"No! May the demon fly away with me if I ever saw you before!"

"Nor you, Dick?" inquired the old man, in a mild voice, turning to the one addressed.

"Ay, burn you! I don't want to see you now!"

"Steve! Steve!" said the old man, in a pitiful voice, waking the sleeper. "Don't you know me either?"

"Don't bother me," said that worthy, giving himself another turn and another settle to sleep.

"Dolls! blockheads! brutes! I do you know me now?" growled the visitor, changing his voice.

"Our Captain!"

"Our Captain!" they simultaneously cried.

"Hush, sink your souls! Do you want to bring the warden upon us?" growled Black Demon Dick, for it was unquestionably he in a new metamorphosis.

"Then all I have to say, Captain, is that you have left us here a blamed long time!"

"And exposed you to sore temptation to peach on me! Couldn't help it, lads! I couldn't help it! I waited until I could do something to the purpose!"

"Now, may Satan roast me alive if I know what you have done to turn yourself into an old man?" Burn my soul! If I should know you now, Captain, if it wasn't for your voice," grumbled Steve.

"Listen, then, you ungrateful, suspicious wretches! I did for you what no captain ever did of his men before. I had exhausted all manner of disguises, so that the authorities would almost have looked for me in an old woman's gown! So, then, what I did: I put myself on a month's regimen of vegetable diet, and kept myself in a cavern, until I grew as pale and thin as a hermit! Then I shaved off my hair, beard, moustaches and eyebrows! Yes, blame you, I sacrificed all my beauty to your interests! Fate hops those who help together hosts of people and preachers, giving me the opportunity of appearing with those exciting inquiry. I put on a gray wig, a black suit, as-

It's only another parson!"

—do you think that these
Gray do. I think we had bet-
ter go to talk to them alone
and get more good, if he has
said this. Confident, who
previous boasting, begin-
ning under the hideous glare

"I" faltered the preacher,
of the coat of the warden.
I this! the whole on you.
a ogle to be stared at!"
with a baleful glare that
and the preacher, shudder.

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and preachers, giv-
ing without recel-
g; a blank suit, as-

sumed a feeble voice, stooping gait, and a devout
manner, and—became a popular preacher at the
camp-meeting!"

"Captain your a brick! I was, indeed! I do
not flatter you!" said Dick. It was a sentiment in
which they all agreed.

"I had no need of further machination," con-
tinued the captain; "they actually gave me the
game! I was urged to visit you here—forced to
remain alone and talk with you!" laughed Black
Donald.

"And now, Captain, my jewel! my treasure!
my sweetheart! that I love with 'a love passing
the love of woman!' how is your reverence go-
ing to get us out?"

"Listen!" said the Captain, diving into his
pockets. "You must get yourselves out!—this
prison is by no means strongly fastened, or well
guarded. Here are files to file off your fetters;
here are tools to pick the locks, and here are three
loaded revolvers to use against any of the turn-
keys who might discover and attempt to stop you.
To-night, however, is the last of the camp-meet-
ing, and the two turnkeys are among my hearers!
I shall keep them all night! Now you know
what to do. I must leave you. Dick, try to
make an assault on me that I may scream—but
first conceal your tools and arms."

Hal hid the instruments, and Dick, with an
awful roar, sprang at the visitor, who ran to the
grating, crying:

"Help! help!"

The warden came hurrying to the spot.
"Take 'im out o' this, then!" muttered Dick,
sulkily, getting back into his corner.

"Oh what a wretch!" said Mrs. Comdiment.
"I shall be glad when he's once hanged," said
the jailer.

"I—I—fear that I can do them but little good,
and—and I would rather not come again, being
sickly and nervous," faltered Father Gray.
"No, my dear good sir. I for one shall not ask
you to risk your precious health for such a set
of wretches. They are Satan's own! You shall
come home to our tent and lie down to rest, and
I will make you an egg-custard that will set you
up again," said Mrs. Comdiment, tenderly, as the
whole party left the cell.

That day the outrageous conduct of the im-
prisoned burglars was the subject of conversation,
even dividing the interest of the religious excite-
ment.

But the next morning the whole community
was thrown into a state of consternation by the
discovery that the burglars had broken jail and
fled, and that the notorious outlaw, Black Donald,
had been in their very midst, disguised as an
elderly field preacher.

CHAPTER XXIX.

THE VICTORY OVER DEATH.

"Glory to God! to God!" he said.
"Knowledge by suffering overleth
And life is perfected in death."

E. B. BROWNING.

One morning, in the gladness of his heart,
Doctor Day mounted his horse and rode down to
Stanton, gaily refusing to impart the object of
his ride to any one, and biding Traversa stay
with the women until he should return.

As soon as the doctor was gone, Traversa went
into the library to arrange his patron's books
and papers.

Mrs. Rockeard and Clara hurried away to attend to
some little mystery of their own invention, for
the surprise and delight of the doctor and Traversa.
For the more secret accomplishment of their
purpose, they had dismissed all attendances,
and were at work alone in Mrs. Rockeard's room.
And here Clara's sweet, frank and humble dis-
position was again manifested, for when Marah
would arise from her seat to get anything, Clara
would forestall her purpose, and say:

"Tell me—tell me to get what you want, just
as if I were your child, and you will make me
feel so well—do now!"

"You are very good, dear Miss Clara, but—I
would rather not presume to ask you to wait on
me," said Marah, gravely.

For a moment what a word from you to me; please
don't use it ever again, nor call me *Miss* Clara.
Call me 'Clara' or 'child,' do mamma," said the

doctor's daughter; then suddenly pausing, she
blushed and was silent.

Marah gently took her hand, and drew her into a
warm embrace.

It was while the friends were conversing so
kindly in Marah's room, and while Traversa was
still engaged in arranging the doctor's books and
papers, that one of the men-servants rapped at
the library door, and without waiting permission
to come in, entered the room with every mark of
terror in his look and manner.

"What is the matter?" inquired Traversa,
anxiously rising.

"Oh, Mr. Traversa, sir! the doctor's horse has
just rushed home to the stables all in a foam,
without his rider."

"Good Heaven!" exclaimed Traversa, starting
up and seizing his hat; "follow me immediately;
hurry to the stables and saddle my horse, and
bring him up instantly! I must follow on the
road the doctor took, to see what has happened!
Stay! on your life, breathe not a word of what
has occurred! I would not have Miss Day alarm-
ed for the world!" he concluded, hastening down
stairs attended by the servant.

Traversa was in the saddle, galloping towards
Stanton, and looking attentively along the road as
he went. Alas! he had not gone far, when, in
descending the wooded hill, he saw lying doubled
up helplessly on the right side of the path, the
body of the good doctor.

With an exclamation between a groan and a cry
of anguish, Traversa threw himself from his
saddle and knelt beside the fallen figure, gazing
in an agony of anxiety upon the closed eyes, pale
features and contracted form, and crying:

"Oh, heaven have mercy! Doctor Day! oh,
Doctor Day—I can you speak to me?"

The white and quivering eyelids opened and
the faltering tongue spoke:

"Traversa—get me home—that I may see—
Clara before I die."

"Oh, must this be so! must this be so! Oh
that I could die for you, my friend! my dear,
dear friend!" cried Traversa, wringing his hands
in such anguish as he had never known before.

Then feeling the need of self-control and the
absolute necessity of removing the sufferer, Traversa
repressed the swelling flood of sorrow in his
bosom and cast about for the means of conveying
the doctor to his house. He dreaded to leave him
for an instant, and yet it was necessary to do so,
had not yet come up.

While he was bathing the doctor's face with
water from a little stream beside the path, John
the groom came riding along, and seeing his fallen
master, with an exclamation of horror, sprang
from his saddle and ran to the spot.

"John," said Traversa, in a heart-broken tone,
"mount again and ride for your life to the house!
I have—a cart—yes! that will be the easiest con-
veyance! I have a cart got ready instantly with a
feather-bed placed in it, and the gentlest horse
harnessed to it, and drive it here to the roadside
at the head of this path. Hasten for your life! I
say not a word of what has happened lest it
should terrify the ladies! Quick! quick! on
your life!"

Again, as the man was hurrying away, the doc-
tor spoke, faintly murmuring:

"For heaven's sake—do not let—poor Clara be
shocked!"

"No, no, she shall not be; I warned him, dear
friend. Do you feel?—can you tell where you
are hurt?"

The doctor feebly moved one hand to his chest
and whispered:

"There, and in my back."

Traversa, controlling his own great mental
agony, did all that he could to soothe and alleviate
the sufferings of the doctor, until the arrival of
the cart that stopped on the road at the head of
the little bridge! Jump where the accident happened.
Then John leaped from the driver's seat and
came to the spot where he tenderly assisted the
young man in raising the doctor and conveying
him to the cart and laying him upon the bed.

Notwithstanding all their tender care in lifting
and carrying him, it was but too evident that he
suffered greatly in being moved. Slowly as they
proceeded, at every jolt of the cart, his corrugated
brow and blanched and quivering lips told how
much agony he silently endured.

Thus at last they reached home. He was care-
fully raised by the bed and borne into the house
and up-stairs to his own chamber, where, being
undressed, he was laid upon his own easy couch.
Traversa sent off for other medical aid, adminis-
tered a restorative, and proceeded to examine his
injuries.

"It is useless, dear boy, useless all! you have
medical knowledge enough to be sure of that as
I am. Cover me up, and let me compose myself
before seeing Clara, and while I do so, go you and
break this news gently to the poor child!" said
the doctor, who, being under the influence of the
restorative, spoke more steadily than at any time
since his fall.

Traversa, almost broken-hearted, obeyed his
benefactor, and went to seek his betrothed, pray-
ing the Lord to teach him how to tell her this
dreadful calamity and to support her under its
crushing weight.

As he went slowly, wringing his hands, he sud-
denly met Clara with her dress in disorder and her
hair flying, just as she had rushed from her room
while dressing for dinner. Hurrying towards
him, she exclaimed:

"Traversa, what has happened? for the good
Lord's sake tell me quickly! the house is all in
confusion! every one is pale with fright! I
no one will answer me! your mother just now ran
past me out of the store-room, with her face as
white as death! Oh, what does it all mean?"

"Clara, love, come and sit down, you are almost
fainting—oh, Heaven support her!" murmured
Traversa, as he led the poor girl to the hall sofa.

"Tell me! tell me!" she said.

"Clara—your father—"

"My father! Oh, no, no, do not say any harm
has happened to my father! do not, Traversa, do
not!"

"Oh, Clara, try to be firm, dear one!"

"My father! oh, my father! he is DEAD!"
shrieked Clara, starting up wildly to run—she
knew not whither.

Traversa sprang up and caught her arm, and
drawing her gently back to her seat, said:

"No, dear Clara, no—not so bad as that! he
is living."

"Oh, thank Heaven for so much! what is it,
then, Traversa? He is ill—oh, let me go to
him."

"Stay, dear Clara! compose yourself first!
You would not go and disturb him with this
frightened and distressed face of yours—let me
get you a glass of water," said Traversa, starting
up and bringing the needed sedative from an ad-
joining room.

"There, Clara, drink that, and offer a silent
prayer to Heaven to give you self-control."

"I will! oh, I must, for his sake. But, tell
me, Traversa, is it—is it as I fear—as he expected
—apoplexy?"

"No, dear love, no; he rode out this morning
and his horse got frightened by the van of a circus
company that was going into the town, and—"

"—And ran away with him and threw him!
Oh, Heaven! oh, my dear father!" exclaimed
Clara, once more clasping her hands wildly, and
starting up.

Again Traversa promptly but gently detained
her, saying:

"You promised me to be calm, dear Clara, and
you must be so before I can suffer you to see your
father."

Clara sank into her seat and covered her face
with her hands, murmuring in a broken voice:

"How can I be? Oh, how can I be, when my
heart is wild with grief and fright? Traversa!
was he—was he—oh! I dread to ask you! Oh!
was he much hurt?"

"Clara, love, his injuries are internal. Neither
he nor I yet know their full extent. I have sent
for two old and experienced practitioners from
Stanton. I expect them every moment. In the
meantime, I have done all that is possible for his
relief."

"Traversa," said Clara, very calmly, encour-
aging herself by an almost superhuman effort:
"Traversa, I will be composed; you shall see that
I will; take me to my dear father's bedside; it is
there that I ought to be!"

"That is my dear, brave, dutiful girl! Come,
Clara," replied the young man, taking her hand
and leading her up to the bed-chamber of the
doctor. They met Mrs. Rockeard at the door, who
tearfully signed them to go in as she left it.

When they entered and approached the bedside, Traversé saw that the suffering but heroic father must have made some superlative effort before he could have reduced his haggard face and writhing form to its present state of placid repose, to meet his daughter's eyes and spare her feelings.

She, on her part, was no less firm. Kneeling beside his couch, she took his hand and met his eyes composedly, as she asked:

"Dear father, how do you feel now?"

"Not just so easy, love, as I had laid me down here for an afternoon's nap, yet in no more pain than I can very well bear."

"Dear father, what can I do for you?"

"You may bathe my forehead and lips with cologne, my dear," said the doctor, not so much for the sake of the reviving perfume, as because he knew it would comfort Clara, to feel that she was doing something, however slight, for him.

Traversé stood upon the opposite side of the bed, fanning him.

In a few moments Mrs. Rocks re-entered the room, announcing that the two old physicians from Staunton, Doctor Dawson and Doctor Williams, had arrived.

"Show them up, Mrs. Rocks; Clara, love, retire while the physicians remain with me," said Doctor Day.

Mrs. Rocks left the room to do his bidding, and Clara followed and sought the privacy of her own apartment, to give way to the overwhelming grief which she could no longer resist.

As soon as she was gone the doctor also yielded to the force of the suffering that he had been able to endure silently in her presence, and writhed and groaned in agony, that wrung the heart of Traversé to behold.

Presently the two physicians entered the room, and approached the bed with expressions of sincere grief at beholding their old friend in such a condition, and a hope that they might speedily be able to relieve him.

To all of which the doctor, repressing all exhibition of pain, and holding out his hand in a cheerful manner, replied:

"I am happy to see you in a friendly way, old friends. I am willing also that you should try what you can do for me—but I warn you that it will be useless. A few hours, or days of inflammation, fever, and agony; then the ease of mortification; then dissolution."

"Tut, tut," said Williams, cheerfully, "we never permit a patient to pronounce a prognosis upon his own case."

"Friend, my horse ran away, stumbled and fell upon me, and rolled over me, getting up; the viscera are crushed within me; breathing is difficult; speech, painful; motion, agonizing;—but you may examine and satisfy yourselves," said Dr. Day, still speaking cheerfully, though with great suffering.

His old friend proceeded gently to the examination, which resulted in their silently and perfectly coinciding in opinion with the patient himself.

Then, with Dr. Day and Traversé, they entered into a consultation, and agreed upon the best palliatives that could be administered; and begging that if in any manner, professionally or otherwise, they could serve their suffering friend, at any hour of the day or night, they might be summoned, they took leave.

As soon as they had gone, Clara, who had given way to a flood of tears, and regained her composure, rapped for admittance.

"Presently, dear daughter, presently," said the doctor, who then beckoning Traversé to stoop low, said:

"Do not let Clara sit up with me to-night; I foresee a night of great anguish, which I may not be able to repress, and which I would not have her witness. Promise you will keep her away."

"I promise," faltered the almost broken-hearted youth.

"You may admit her now," said the doctor, composing his convulsed countenance as best he could, lest the sight of his suffering should distress his daughter.

Clara entered and resumed her post at the side of the bed.

Traversé left the room to prepare the palliatives for his patient.

The afternoon waned. As evening approached,

the fever, inflammation and pain arose to such a degree, that the doctor could no longer forbear betraying his excessive suffering, which was, besides, momentarily increasing; so he said to Clara:

"My child, you must now leave me and retire to bed. I must be watched by Traversé alone, to-night."

And Traversé, seeing her painful hesitation, between the extreme reluctance to leave him, and her wish to obey him, approached and murmured:

"Dear Clara, it would distress him to have you stay; he will be much better attended by me alone."

Clara still hesitated; and Traversé, beckoning his mother to come and speak to her, left her side.

Mrs. Rocks approached her and said:

"It must be so, dear girl, for you know that there are some cases in which sick men should be watched by men only, and this is one of them. I myself shall sit up to-night in the next room."

"And may I not sit there beside you?" pleaded Clara.

"No, my dear love; as you can do your father no good, he desires that you should go to bed and rest. Do not distress him by retreating."

"Oh, and am I to go to bed and sleep while my dear father lies here suffering?—I cannot! Oh,

"My dear, yes, you must; and if you cannot sleep, you can be awake and pray for him."

Here the doctor, whose agony was growing unendurable, called out:

"Go, Clara, go at once, my dear."

She went back to the bedside and pressed her lips to his forehead, and put her arms around him and prayed:

"Oh, my dear father, may the blessed Saviour take you in his pitying embrace and give you ease to-night. Your poor Clara will pray for you as she never prayed for herself!"

"May the Lord bless you my sweet child," said the doctor, lifting one hand painfully and laying it in benediction on her fair and graceful head.

Then she arose and left the room, saying to Mrs. Rocks, as she went:

"Oh, Mrs. Rocks, only last evening we were so happy!—But if we have received good things at the hand of God, why should we not receive evil?"

"Yes, my child; but remember nothing is really evil that comes from His good hand," said Mrs. Rocks, as she attended Clara to the door.

His daughter had no sooner gone out of hearing, than the doctor gave way to his irrepresible groans.

At a sign from Traversé Mrs. Rocks went and took up her position in the adjoining room.

Then Traversé rubbed the light in the sick chamber, arranged the pillows of the couch, administered a sedative, and took up his post beside the bed, where he continued to watch and nurse the patient with unwearying devotion.

At the dawn of day, when Clara rapped at the door, he was in no condition to be seen by his daughter.

Clara was put off with some plausible excuse.

After breakfast his friends the physicians called and spent several hours in his room. Clara was told that she must not be in his room; they were there. And so, by one means and another, the poor girl was spared from witnessing these dreadful agonies which, had she seen them, must have so bitterly increased her distress.

In the afternoon, during a temporary mitigation of pain, Clara was admitted to see her father. But in the evening as his sufferings again increased, she was again, upon the same pretext, excluded from his chamber.

Then passed another night of suffering, during which Traversé never left for an instant.

Towards morning the fever and pain abated, and he fell into a sweet sleep. About sunrise he awoke quite free from suffering. Alas! it was the case that he had predicted—the case of preceding dissolution.

"It is gone forever now, Traversé, my boy, thank God my last hours will be sufficiently free from pain to enable me to set my house in order. Before calling Clara in, I would talk to you alone. You will remain here until all is over?"

"Oh, yes, sir! yes! I would do anything on earth—anything for you. I would lay down my life this hour, if I could do so to save you from this bed of death."

"Nay, do not talk so; your young life belongs to others—to Clara and your mother. 'God should fall, than the building germ. I do not feel it hard to die, dear Traversé. Though the journey has been very pleasant, the goal is not the unwelcome. Earth has been very sweet to me, but Heaven is sweeter."

"Oh! but we love you so! we love you so! you have so much to live for!" exclaimed Traversé, with an irrepresible burst of grief.

"Poor boy, life is too hopeful before you to make you a comforter by a deathbed. Yes, Traversé, I have much to live for, but more to die for. Yet not voluntarily would I have left you, though I know that I leave you in the hands of the Lord, and with every blessing and promise of his bountiful providence. Your love will console my child. My conscience in you makes me easy in committing her to your charge."

"Oh, Doctor Day, may the Lord so deal with my soul eternally, as I shall discharge this trust," said Clara, earnestly.

"I know you will be true—I wish you to remain here with Clara and your mother for a few weeks, until the child's age, violence of grief shall be over. Then you had best leave me to take care of Clara, and go you to the West, get into practice there, and at the end of a few years return and marry Clara. Traversé, there is one promise I must have of you."

"I give it before it is named, dear friend," said Traversé, fervently.

"My child is but seventeen; she is so gentle that her will is subject to that of all she loves, especially to yours. She will do anything in conscience that you ask her to do. Traversé, I wish you to promise me that you will not press her to marriage until she shall be at least twenty years old. And—"

"Oh, sir, I promise! Oh, believe me, my affection for Clara is so pure and so constant, as well as so confiding in her faith and so solicitous love, and the privilege of visiting her and writing to her, I could wait many years if needful."

"I believe you, my dear boy. And the very promise I have asked for you is as much for your sake as for hers. No girl can marry before she is twenty without serious risk of life, and almost certain loss of health and beauty; that so many do is one reason why there are such numbers of sickly and faded young wives. If Clara's constitution should be broken down by prematurely assuming cares and burdens of matrimony, you would be as unfortunate in having a sickly wife, as she would be in losing her health."

"Oh, sir, I promise you, that no matter how much I may wish to do so, I will not be tempted to make a wife of Clara, until she has attained the age you have prescribed. But at the same time, I must assure you that such is my love for her, that if accident should now make her invalid for life she should be as dear—as dear—as account; and if I could not marry her for a wife, I should marry her only as the dear privilege of waiting on her night and day. Oh, believe me, my mind to my faithful care!" said Traversé, with a boyish blush suffusing his cheeks and tears filling his eyes.

"I do, Traversé! I do!—and now to other things."

"Are you not talking too much, dear friend?"

"No, no, I must talk while I have time. I was about to say that long ago, my will was made. Clara, you know, is the heiress of all I possess. You, as soon as you become her husband, will receive her fortune with her. I have made no reservation in her favor against you; for to him to whom I can entrust the higher charge of my daughter's person, happiness and honor, I can also entrust her fortune."

"Dear sir, I am glad, for Clara's sake, that she has a fortune; as for me, I hope you will let and worked for dear Clara all the days of my life."

"I do believe it. But this will was made,

! I would do anything on
you. I would lay down my
could do so to save you from

so: your young life belongs
and your mother. "Go!
! Better the ripened ear
! budding germ. I do not
! Travers. Though the
! pleasant, the goal is not
! as I've been sweet to me,
! er."

you so! we love you so!
live for!" exclaimed Tra-
vatore burst of grief.
! before you to be
! by a doubtless. Yes, Tra-
! live for, but more to die
! would I have left you,
! leave you in the hands of
! your blessing and promise
! of confidence. Your love will
! her to your charge. "I
! say the Lord so deal with
! I shall discharge this
! earnestly.

! true—I wish you to re-
! me—my mother for a few
! first. Absence of grief
! you had been to curse the
! your good mother here
! and go you to the West,
! and at the end of a few
! Clara. Travers, there
! have of you."

! named, dear friend."

! then; she is so gentle
! to that of all she loves,
! she will do anything in
! her to do. Travers, I
! know you will not press
! that as at least twenty

! Oh, believe me, my af-
! fection, so constant, as
! as faith and so solicitous
! the assurance of her
! loving her and writing
! to me!

! boy and the very
! you is as much for
! girl can marry before
! is risk of life, and al-
! and beauty; that so
! why there are such
! young wives. If
! be burdens of ma-
! fortunate in having a
! in losing her health."
! that no matter how
! will not be tempted
! she has attained
! But at the same
! that such is my love
! and now make her an
! as dear—as dear—
! possible on that very
! nary her for a wife,
! the dear privilege
! day! Oh, believe
! dear daughter with
! re! said Travers,
! his cheeks and tears

! and now to others
! ch, dear friend?"
! I have time.
! ago, my will was
! the heiress of all I
! become her hus-
! with her. I have
! favor against you;
! the higher charge
! business and honor.

! Clara's sake, that
! I hope you will
! my disposed with
! the days of my
! will be made,

Travers, three years ago, before any of us as-
tiopiated the present relations between you and
my daughter, and while you were both still
children. Therefore, I appointed my wife's half
brother, Clara's only male relative, Colonel Le
Noir, as her guardian. It is true, we have never
been very intimate; for our paths in life widely
diverged; nor has my Clara seen him within her
recollection; for since her mother's death, which
took place in her infancy, he has never been at
our house. But he is a man of high reputation
and excellent character. I have already re-
quested Doctor Williams to write for him, so
that I expect he will be here in a very few
days. When he comes, Travers, you will tell
him that it is my desire that my daughter shall
continue to reside in her present home, retain-
ing Mrs. Rooke as her matronly companion. I
have also requested Doctor Williams to tell him
the same thing, so that in the mouths of two
witnesses my wish may be established."

Now, Travers, he never in his life before
heard the name of Colonel Le Noir; and there-
fore was in no position to warn the dying father
who placed so much confidence in the high re-
putation of his brother-in-law, that his trust was
unwisely misplaced—that he was leaving his fair
daughter and a large fortune to the tender
mercies of an unscrupulous villain and a consu-
mate hypocrite. So he merely promised to deliver
the message with which he was charged by the
dying father, for his daughter's guardian, and
added that he had no doubt that Clara's uncle
would consider that message a sacred command
and obey it to the letter.

As the sun was now well up, the doctor con-
sented that Mrs. Rooke and his daughter should be
admitted.

Marah brought with her some wine—why, that
her patient drank, and from which he received
temporary strength.

Clara was pale but calm; one could see at a
glance that the poor girl was prepared for the
worst, and had nerved her gentle heart to bear it
with patience.

"Come hither my little Clara," said the doctor,
as soon as he had been revived by his whey.
Clara came and kissed his brow, and sat beside
him with her hands clasped in his.

"My little girl, what did our Saviour die for?
First to redeem us, and also to teach us by his
burial and resurrection that death is but a falling
asleep in this world and an awakening in the next.
Clara, after this, when you think of your father,
do not think of him as lying in the grave; for he
will not be there in his veiled body, no more
than he will be in the trunk with his cast-off
clothes. As the coat is the body's covering, so
the body is the soul's garment, and it is the soul
that is the innermost and real man; it is my soul
that is me; and that will not be in the earth but
in Heaven! therefore do not think of me gloomily as
lying in the grave, but cheerfully as living in
Heaven—as living there with God and Christ and
his saints, and with your mother, Clara, the dear
wife of my youth, who has been waiting for me
these many years. Think of me as being happy
in this blessed society. Do not fancy that it is
your duty to grieve, but on the contrary know
that it is your duty to be as cheerful and happy
as possible. Do you heed me, my daughter?"

"Oh, yes! yes, dear father!" said Clara, he-
roically repressing her grief.

"Seek for yourself, dear child, a nearer union
with Christ and God. Seek it, Clara, until the
spirit of God shall bear witness with your spirit
that you are as a child of God! so shall you, as
you come to lie where I do now, be able to say
of your life and death, as I say with truth of
mine—"The journey has been pleasant, but the
goal is blessed!"—"

The doctor pressed his daughter's hand, and
dropped suddenly into an easy sleep.

Mrs. Rooke drew Clara away, and the room was
very still.

Sweet, beautiful and lovely as is the death-
bed of a Christian, we will not linger too long be-
side it.

All day the good man's bodily life ebbed gently
away. He spoke at intervals as he had strength
given him, words of affection, comfort, and coun-
sel to those around him.

Just as the setting sun was pouring his last
rays into the chamber, Doctor Day laid his hand
upon his child's head and blessed her. Then,

closing his eyes, he murmured softly: "Lord
Jesus, into thy hands I resign my spirit;" and
with that sweet, deep, intense smile that had
been so lovely in life, now so much lovelier in
death, his spirit winged its flight to the
realms of eternal bliss!

CHAPTER XXX.

[THE ORPHAN.]

"Let me do, father! I fear, I fear."

To fall in earth's terrible strife!"

"Not so, my child, for the crown must be won
in the battle-field of life."—LIFE AND DEATH.

"He has gone to sleep again," said Clara, with
a sigh of relief.

"He has gone to Heaven, my child," said
Marah Rooke, softly.

The orphan started, gazed wildly on the face
of the dead, turned ghastly pale and with a low
moan and suffocating sob, fell fainting into the
motherly arms of Mrs. Rooke.

Marah beckoned Travers, who lifted the in-
sensible girl tenderly in his arms, and preceded by
his mother, bore her to her chamber and laid
her upon the bed.

Then Marah dismissed Travers to attend to
the duties owed to the remains of the beloved de-
parted, while she herself stood with Clara, using
every means for her restoration.

Clara opened her eyes at length, but in reviving
to life also returned to grief. Dreadful to witness
was the sorrow of the orphan girl. She had con-
trolled her grief in the presence of her father, and
while he lingered in life, only to give way now to
its overwhelming force. Marah remained with
her, holding her in her arms, weeping with her,
praying for her, doing all that the most tender
mother could do to soothe, console and strengthen
the bleeding young heart.

The funeral of Doctor Day took place the
third day from his decease, and was attended by
all the gentry of the neighboring town and the
county, in their own carriages, and by crowds who
came on foot to pay the last tribute of respect to
their beloved friend.

He was interred in the family burial ground,
situated on a wooded hill up behind the home-
stead, and at the head of the last resting-place
was afterwards erected a plain obelisk of white
marble, with his name and the date of his birth
and death, and the following inscription:

"HE IS NOT HERE, BUT IS BLESSED."

"When dear Clara comes to weep at her
father's grave, these words will send her away
comforted, and with her faith renewed," had been
Travers Rooke's secret thought, when giving
directions for the inscription of this inspiring
text.

On the morning of the day succeeding the
funeral, while Clara, exhausted by the violence of
her grief, lay prostrate upon her chamber couch,
Mrs. Rooke and Travers sat conversing in that
once pleasant, now desolate, morning reading
room.

"You know, dear mother, that by the doctor's
desire, which should be considered sacred, Clara is
still to live here, and you are to remain to take
care of her. I shall defer my journey West, until
everything is settled to Clara's satisfaction, and
she has in some degree recovered her equanimity.
I must also have an interview and a good under-
standing with her guardian, for whom I have a
message."

Who is that guardian of whom I have heard you
speak more than once, Travers?" asked Marah.
"Dear mother, will you believe me that I have
forgotten the man's name? It was an uncommon
name that I had never heard before in my life, and,
in the presence of grief upon my mind, its exact
identity escaped my memory; but that does not
signify much, as he is expected hourly; and when
he announces himself, either by card or word of
mine, I shall know, for I shall recognise the
name the moment I see it written or hear it spoken.
Let me see—it was something like Des Moines,
De Vaun, De Sauls—or something of that sort.
At all events, I am sure I shall know it again the
instant I see or hear it. And now, dear mother, I
must ride up to Stanton to see some of the doctor's
poor sick, that he left in my charge for as long as
I stay here. I shall be back by three o'clock. I

need not ask you to take great care of that dear
suffering girl up stairs," said Travers, taking his
hat and gloves for a ride.

"I shall go and stay with her as soon as she
wakes," answered Mrs. Rooke.

And Travers, satisfied, left his way.
He had been gone perhaps an hour, when the
sound of a carriage was heard below in the front
of the house, followed soon by a loud rapping at
the hall door.

"It is dear Clara's guardian," said Marah
Rooke, rising and listening.

Soon a servant entered and placed a card in her
hand, saying:

"The gentleman is waiting in the hall below,
and asked to see the person that was in charge
here, ma'am. So I took the card to you."
"You did right, John. Show the gentleman
up here," said Marah; and as soon as the servant
had gone she looked at the card, but failed to
make it out. The name was engraved, in Old
English text, and in such a complete labyrinth,
thicket and network of ornate flourishes, that no
one who was not familiar at once with the name
and the style could possibly have distinguished it.

"I do not think my boy would know this name
at sight?" was Marah's thought, as she twisted
the card in her hand, and stood waiting the en-
trance of the visitor, whose step was now heard
coming up the stairs. Soon the door was thrown
open, and the stranger entered.

Marah, habitually shy in the presence of stran-
gers, dropped her eyes before she had fairly taken
in the figure of a tall, handsome, dark comple-
cted, distinguished-looking man somewhat past
middle age, and arrayed in a rich military cloak,
and carrying in his hand a military cap.

The servant who admitted him had scarcely
retired, when Marah looked up, and her eyes and
those of the stranger met—and—

"MARAH ROOKE!!!"

"COLONEL LE NOIR!!!"

Le Noir first recovered himself, and holding
out both hands, advanced towards her with a
smile as if to greet an old friend.

But Marah, shrinking from him in horror,
turned and tottered to the farthest window, where
leaning her head against the sash, she moaned:

"Oh, my heart! my heart! in this the will to
whom my lamb must be committed!"

As she moaned these words, she was aware of
a soft step at her side and a low voice murmur-
ing:

"Marah Rooke, yes! the same beautiful Marah
that as a girl of fifteen, twenty years ago, turned
my head, led me by her fatal charms into the
very jaws of death! the same lovely Marah with
her beauty only ripened by time and exalted by
sorrow."

With one surprised, indignant look, but with-
out a word of reply, Mrs. Rooke turned and
walked composedly towards the door with the in-
tention of quitting the room.

Colonel Le Noir saw and forestalled her pur-
pose by springing forward, turning the key, and
standing before the door.

"Forgive me, Marah, but I must have a word
with you before we part," he said, in those soft,
sweet, persuasive tones he knew so well how to
assume.

Marah remembered that she was an honourable
matron and an honored mother, that as such,
fears and tremors and self-distrust in the pres-
ence of a villain, would not well become her; so
calling up all the gentle dignity latent in her na-
ture, she resumed her seat, and signing to
the visitor to follow her example, she said com-
posedly:

"Speak on, Colonel Le Noir,—remembering, if
you please, to whom you speak."

"I do remember, Marah! remember but
wait!"

"They call me Mrs. Rooke who converse
me, sir."

"Marah, why this resentment? Is it so
that you can still be angry? Have I not
tried to my attachment all these years, and you
throughout the world to find this recap
last?"

"Colonel Le Noir, if this is all you had
to say was scarcely worth while to have detain-
ed said Mrs. Rooke, calmly.

"But it is not all, my Marah. Yes, I, a

mine by virtue of the strongest attachment man ever felt for woman. Marah Roque, you are feeling worthy to be called a passion—"

"Colonel Le Noir, how dare you blaspheme this house of mourning by such sinful words! You forget where you stand and to whom you speak."

"I forget nothing, Marah Roque, nor do I violate this sanctuary of sorrow,"—here he sunk his voice below his usual low tones—"when I speak of the passion that maddened my youth and withered my manhood—a passion whose intensity was its excuse for all extravagance, and whose enduring constancy is its final, full justification."

Before he had finished this sentence, Marah Roque had calmly arisen and pulled the bell-rope. "What mean you by that, Marah?" he inquired. Before she replied, a servant, in answer to the bell, came to the door and tried the latch; and, finding it locked, rapped.

With a blush that mounted to his forehead, and with a half-suppressed imprecation, Colonel Le Noir went and unlocked the door, and admitted the man.

"John," said Mrs. Roque, quietly, "show Colonel Le Noir to the apartment prepared for him, and wait his orders."

And, with a slight nod to the guest, she went calmly from the room.

Colonel Le Noir, unmindful of the presence of the servant, stood gazing in angry mortification after her. The flush on his brow had given way to the fearful pallor of rage or hate, as he muttered inaudibly:

"Insolent beggar! contradiction always confirms my half-formed resolutions; years ago I swore to possess that woman, and I will do it, if it be only to keep my oath and humble her insolence. She is very handsome still; she shall be my slave."

Then, perceiving the presence of John, he said:

"Lead the way to my room, sirrah, and then go and order my fellow to bring up my portmanteau."

John devoutly pulled his forelock as he bowed low, and then went out, followed by Colonel Le Noir.

Marah Roque meanwhile had gained the privacy of her own chamber, where all her firmness deserted her.

Throwing herself into a chair, she clasped her hands and sat with blanched face and staring eyes, like a marble statue of despair.

"Oh, what shall I do? what shall I do while this miscreant remains here?—this villain whose very presence desecrates the roof and dishonours me? I would instantly leave the house but that I must not abandon poor Clara."

"I cannot claim the protection of Traversé, for I would not provoke him to wrath or run him into danger; nor indeed would I even permit my son to dream such a thing possible as that his mother could receive insult."

"Nor can I warn Clara of the unprincipled character of her guardian, for if she knew him as he is, she would surely treat him in such a way as to get his enmity—his dangerous, fatal enmity—doubly fatal since her person and property are legally at his disposal. Oh, my dove, my dove! that you should be in the power of this villain. What shall I do, oh, Heaven!"

Marah dropped on her knees and finished her soliloquy with prayer. Then, feeling composed and strengthened, she went to Clara's room.

She found the poor girl lying awake and quietly weeping.

"Your guardian has arrived, love," she said, sitting down beside the bed and taking Clara's hand.

"Oh, must I get up and dress to see a stranger?" sighed Clara, wearily.

"No, love, you need not stir until it is time to dress for dinner; it will answer quite well if you meet your guardian at table," said Marah, with particular reason for wishing that Clara should first see Colonel Le Noir with other company, to have an opportunity of observing him well and possibly forming an estimate of his character (as a young girl of her fine instincts *toto-toto* to those despicable blandishments he knew so well how to bring into play).

"That is a respite! Oh, dear Mrs. Roque, you don't know how I dread to see any one!"

"My dear Clara, you must combat grief by prayer, which is the only thing that can overcome it," said Marah.

Mrs. Roque remained with her young charge down stairs to oversee the preparation of the dinner.

And it was at the dinner-table that Marah, with the quiet and gentle dignity for which she was distinguished, introduced the younger members of the family to the guest, in these words:

"Your ward, Miss Day, Colonel Le Noir."

The colonel bowed deeply, and raised the hand silvery and deferentially in words of condolence, sympathy, and melancholy pleasure, withdrew to take her seat.

"Colonel Le Noir, my son, Doctor Roque," said Marah, presenting Traversé.

The colonel stared superciliously, bowed with ironical depth, said he was "much honored," and turning his back on the young man, placed himself at the table.

During the dinner he exerted himself to be agreeable to Miss Day and Mrs. Roque, but Traversé he affected to treat with supercilious neglect, or ironical deference.

Our young physician had too much self-respect to permit himself to be in any degree affected by this rudeness. And Marah on her part, was glad so that it did not trouble Traversé, that Le Noir should behave in this manner, so that Clara should be enabled to form some correct idea of his disposition.

When dinner was over, Clara excused herself and retired to her room, whither she was soon followed by Mrs. Roque.

"Well, my dear, how do you like your guardian?" asked Marah, in a tone as indifferent as she could make it.

"I do not like him at all," exclaimed Clara, her gentle blue eyes flashing with indignation, through their tears; "I do not like him at all, the scornful, arrogant, supercilious—Oh! I do not wish to use such strong language, or to grow angry when I am in such deep grief; but my dear father could not have known this man, or he never would have chosen him for my guardian! I do not think he would, Mrs. Roque?"

"My dear, your excellent father must have thought well of him, or he would never have trusted him with so precious a charge. Whether your father's confidence in this man will be justified as far as you are concerned, time will show. Meanwhile, my love, as the guardian appointed by your father, you should treat him with respect, but so far as *reposing any trust in him goes, consult your own instincts.*"

"I shall! and I thank heaven that I have not got to go and live with Colonel Le Noir!" said Clara, fervently.

Mrs. Roque sighed. She remembered that the arrangement that permitted Clara to live at her own home with her chosen friends was but a verbal one, not binding upon the guardian and executor, unless he chose to convert it to his own use.

Their conversation was interrupted by the entrance of a servant with a message from Colonel Le Noir, expressing a hope that Miss Day felt better from her afternoon's repose, and desiring the favor of her company in the library.

Clara returned an answer pleading indisposition, and begging upon that account to be excused.

At tea, however, the whole family met again. As before, Colonel Le Noir exerted himself to please the ladies, and treated the young man with marked neglect.

This conduct offended Miss Day to such a degree that she, being a girl of truth in thought, word and deed, could only exhibit towards the guest the most freezing politeness that was consistent with her position as hostess, and she longed for the time to come that little circle from the unwelcome presence of this arrogant intruder.

"How can he imagine that I can be pleased with his deference and courtesy and elaborate compliments, when he permits himself to be so rude to Traversé? I hope Traversé will tell him of our engagement, which will, perhaps, suggest while he remains under a roof of which Traversé is the destined master!" said Clara to herself, as she arose from the table, and with a cold bow, turned to retire from the room.

"And will not my fair ward give me a few hours of her company this evening?" inquired Colonel Le Noir, in an insinuating voice, as he took and pressed the hand of the doctor's orphan daughter.

"Excuse me, sir; but except at meal times, I have not left my room since"—here her voice broke down—she could not speak to him of her bereavement, or give way, in his presence, to her holy sorrow. "Besides, sir," she added, "Doctor Roque, I know, has expressed to you his desire for an early interview."

"My fair young friend, Doctor Roque, as you style the young man, will please to be so condescending as to tarry the leisure of his most humble servant," replied the colonel, with an ironical bow in the direction of Traversé.

"Perhaps, sir, when you know that Doctor Roque is charged with the last uttered will of my dear father, and that it is of more importance than you are prepared to anticipate, you may be willing to favor us all by granting this 'young man' an early audience," said Clara.

"The will I uttered will! I had supposed that the will of my late brother-in-law was regularly drawn up and executed, and in the hands of his confidential attorney at Stanton."

"Yes, sir, so it is; but I refer to my father's last dying wishes, his verbal directions entrusted to his confidential friend, Doctor Roque," said Clara.

"Last verbal directions, entrusted to Doctor Roque. Humph! humph! this would require corroborative evidence," said the colonel.

"Such corroborative evidence can be had, sir," said Clara coldly; "and as I know that Doctor Roque has already requested an interview for the sake of an explanation of these subjects, I must also join my own request to his, and assure you that by giving him an early opportunity of coming to an understanding with you, you will greatly oblige me."

"Then, undoubtedly, my sweet young friend, your wishes shall be commands—Eh! you—sir! Doctor—What's your name!—meet me in the library at ten o'clock to-morrow morning," said Le Noir, insolently.

"I have engagements, sir, that will occupy me after that period I am at your disposal," said Traversé, coldly.

"Pardieu! it seems to me that I am placed at your!" replied the colonel, lifting his eyebrows; "but as I am so placed by the orders of my fair little tyrant here, so be it!—at nine to-morrow I am your most obedient servant!"

"At nine then, sir, I shall attend you," said Traversé, with a cold bow.

Clara slightly courted and withdrew from the room, attended by Mrs. Roque.

Traversé, as the only representative of host, remained for a short time with his unaccountable guest, who, totally regardless of his presence, threw himself into an arm chair, lighted a cigar, took up a book, and smoked and read.

Whereupon Traversé, seeing this, withdrew to the library to employ himself with finishing the arranging and tying up of certain papers, left to his charge by Doctor Day.

CHAPTER XXXI.

THE ORPHAN'S TRIAL.

"We met ere yet the world had come
To wither up the springs of youth,
And the holy joys of home,
And in the first warm blush of youth,
We parted as they never part
Who's tears are doomed to be forgot;
(b) by what agony of heart,
I forget me not—I forget me not!"

—ANONYMOUS.

At nine o'clock the next morning Traversé went to the library to keep his tryst with Colonel Le Noir.

Seated in the doctor's leather chair, with his head thrown back, his nose erect, and his white and jewelled hand caressing his mustached chin, the colonel awaited the young man's communication.

With a slight bow, Traversé took a chair and drew it up to the table, seating himself, and after a little hesitation, commenced, and in a modest and self-respectful manner announced that he was

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doctor to the executor of his will.

Colonel Le Noir left off caressing his chin for
an instant, and with a wave of his dainty hand,
silently intimated that the young man should
proceed.

Traverse then began and delivered the dying
directions of the late doctor, to the effect that his
daughter Clara Day should not be removed from
her paternal mansion, but that she should be
suffered to remain there, retaining as a matronly
companion, her old friend Mrs. Marah Rocks.

"Umm! umm! very ingenious, upon my word,"
commented the colonel, still caressing his chin.

"I have now delivered my whole message, sir,
and have only to add that I hope, for Miss Day's
sake, there will be no difficulty thrown in the way
of the execution of her father's last wishes, which
are also, sir, very decidedly her own," said Traver-

se. "Umm—doubtless they are—and also yours
and your worthy mother's."

"Sir, Miss Day's will in this matter is certainly
mine. Apart from the consideration of her pleasure,
my wishes need not be consulted. As soon
as I have seen Miss Day made comfortable, I
leave for the far west," said Traverse, with much
dignity.

"Umm—and leave mamma here to guard the
golden prize until your return, eh?" sneered the
colonel.

"Sir, I do not—*wish* to understand you,"
said Traverse with a flushed brow.

"Possibly not, my excellent young friend,"
said the colonel, ironically; then rising from his
chair and elevating his voice he cried—"But I,
sir, understand you and your mother and your
pretty scheme, perfectly! Very ingenious inven-
tion these 'last verbal instructions.' Very pretty
plan to *entrap* an *heir*; but it shall not avail
you—adventurers that you are!—This afternoon,

Sauter, the confidential attorney of my late
brother-in-law, will be here with the will, which
shall be read in the presence of the assembled
household. If these last verbal directions are to
be found duplicated in the will, very good! they
shall be obeyed! if not, they shall be *discredited*."

During this speech, Traverse stood with kind-
ling eyes and blazing cheeks, scarcely able to
master his indignation; yet, to his credit be it
spoken, he did "rule his own spirit" and reply with
dignity and calmness.

"Colonel Le Noir, my testimony in regard to
the last wishes of Doctor Day, can, if necessary,
be supported by other evidence—though I do not
believe that any man who did not *himself* act in
habitual disregard of truth, would wantonly
question the veracity of another."

"Sir!—this to me!" exclaimed Le Noir, grow-
ing white with rage, and making a step towards
the young man.

"Yes, Colonel Le Noir, that to you! and this in
addition—you have presumed to charge my
mother (in connection with myself with being an
adventurer! with forming dishonourable 'schemes'!
and in so charging her, Colonel Le Noir, you ut-
ter a *falsehood*!"

"SIRRAH!" cried Le Noir, striding towards
Traverse and raising his hand over his head—
with a fearful oath—"retract your words, or—"
Traverse calmly drew himself up, folded his
arms, and replied coolly:

"I am no *brave*, Colonel Le Noir; the pis-
tol and the bowie-knife are as strange to my hands
as abusive epithets and profane language are to
my lips; nevertheless, instead of retracting my
words, I repeat and reiterate them. If you charge
my mother with conspiracy, you utter a *falsehood*.
As her son, I am in duty bound to say as much."

"VILLAIN!" gasped Le Noir, shaking his fist
and choking with rage; "villain! you shall re-
pent this in every vein of your body!"

Then seizing his hat, he strode from the room.
"Booster!" said Traverse to himself, as he
also left the library by another door.

Clara was waiting for him in the little parlor
below.

"Well, well, dear Traverse!" said she, as he
entered. "You have had the explanation with
my guardian, and he makes no objection to carry-
ing out the last directions of my father, and our
own wishes!—he is willing to leave me here?"

"My dear girl, Colonel Le Noir defers all de-
cision until the reading of the will, which is to
take place this afternoon," said Traverse, un-

willing to add to her distress by recounting the
"degreed" scene that had just taken place in the
library.

"Oh! these delays! these delays! Heaven
give me patience! Yet I do not know if I
should be so uneasy! It is only a form! Of
course he will regard my father's wishes."

"I do not see well how he can avoid doing so,
especially as Dr. Williams is another witness to
them, and I shall request the doctor's attendance
here this afternoon. Dear Clara, keep up your
spirits! A few hours, now, and all will be well,"
said Traverse, as he drew on his gloves and took
his hat to go on his morning round of calls.

An early dinner was ordered, for the purpose
of giving ample time in the afternoon for the
reading of the will.

Owing to the kindly forbearance of each mem-
ber of this little family, their meeting with their
guest at the table was not so awkward as it might
have been rendered. Mrs. Rocks had concealed
the insults that had been offered her. Traverse
had said nothing of the affronts put upon him.
So that each, having only their own private in-
juries to resent, felt free in forbearing. Nothing
but this sort of prudence on the part of indi-
viduals rendered their meeting around one board
possible.

While they were still at the table, the attorney,
Mr. Sauter, with Doctors Williams and Dawson,
arrived and was shown into the library.

And very soon after the dessert was put upon
the table, the family left it, and, accompanied by
Colonel Le Noir, adjourned to the library. After
the usual salutations, they arranged themselves
along each side of an extension table, at the head
of which the attorney placed himself.

In the midst of a profound silence the will was
opened and read. It was dated three years be-
fore.

The bulk of his estate, after the paying a few
legacies, was left to his esteemed brother-in-law,
Gabriel Le Noir, in trust for his only daughter,
Clara Day, until the latter should attain the age
of twenty-one, at which period she was to come
into possession of the property. Then followed
the distribution of the legacies. Among the rest
the sum of a thousand dollars left to his young
friend Traverse Rocks, and another thousand to
his esteemed neighbour, Marah Rocks. Gabriel
Le Noir was appointed sole executor of the will,
trustee of the property, and guardian of the
heir.

At the conclusion of the reading Mr. Sauter
folded the document and laid it upon the table.

Colonel Le Noir arose, and said:

"The will of the late Doctor Day has been
read in your presence. I presume you all hear
it, and that there can be no mistake as to its pur-
port. All that remains now is to act upon it. I
shall claim the usual privilege of twelve months
before administering upon the estate or paying
the legacies. In the meantime, I shall assume
the charge of my ward's person, and convey her
to my own residence, known as the Hidden
House. Mrs. Rocks," he said, turning towards
the latter, "your presence and that of your young
charge is no longer required here. Be so good as
out from this place to-morrow morning."

Mrs. Rocks started, looked wistfully in the face
of the speaker, and seeing that he was in deter-
mined earnest, turned her appealing glances
towards Traverse and Doctor Williams.

As for Clara, her face, previously blanched
with grief, was now flushed with indignation.
Her sudden distress and perplexity, she knew
not at once what to do—Whether to utter a pro-
test or continue silent to—whether to leave the room
or remain. Her embarrassment was relieved by
Traverse, who stooping, whispered to her:

"Be calm, love; all shall be well. Doctor
Williams is about to speak."

And at that moment indeed Doctor Williams
arose, and said:

"I have, Colonel Le Noir, to endorse a dying
message from Doctor Day, entrusted to my young
friend here to be delivered to you, to the effect
that it was his last desire and request that his
daughter, Miss Clara Day, should be permitted
to reside during the term of her minority in this
her paternal home, under the care of her pre-
sent matronly friend, Mrs. Marah Rocks, Doctor
Rocks and myself are here to bear testimony to
these, the last wishes of the departed—which

wishes, I believe, also express the desires of his
heirress."

"Oh! yes! yes!" said Clara, earnestly. "I
do very much desire to remain in my own home
among my own familiar friends. My dear father
only consulted my comfort and happiness when
he left these instructions."

"There can be, therefore, no reason why Miss
Day should be disturbed in her present home,"
said Traverse.

Colonel Le Noir smiled grimly, saying:

"I am sorry, Doctor Williams, to differ with
you, or to distress Miss Day. But if, as she
says, her lamented father consulted her pleasure,
in those last instructions, he certainly consulted
nothing *else*—not the proprieties of conventional-
ism, the opinion of the world, nor the future wel-
fare of his daughter. Therefore, as a man of
Doctor Day's high position and character, in his
sane moments, never could have made such a
singular arrangement, I am forced to the conclu-
sion that he could not, at the time of giving those
instructions, have been in his right mind. Con-
sequently, I cannot venture to act upon any
'verbal instructions,' however well attested, but
shall be guided in every respect by the will,
executed while yet the testator was in sound body
and mind."

"Doctor Rocks and myself are both physicians
competent to certify that, at the time of leaving
these directions, our respected friend was per-
fectly sound in mind at least," said Doctor
Williams.

"That, sir, I repeat, I contest. And acting
upon the authority of the will, I shall proceed to
take charge of my ward as well as of her estate.
And as I think this house, under all the circum-
stances, a very improper place for her to remain,
I shall convey her without delay to my own home.
Mrs. Rocks, I believe I requested you to see to
the packing of Miss Day's trunks."

"Oh, heaven, shall this wrong be permitted?"
ejaculated Marah.

"Mrs. Rocks, I will not go unless absolutely
forced to do so, by a decree of the court! I shall
ask Doctor Williams to make an appeal for me to
the Orphan's Court," said Clara, by way of en-
couraging her friend.

"My dear Miss Day, that, I hope, will not be
required. Colonel Le Noir acts under a misappre-
hension of the circumstances. We must enter
into more explanations with him. In the mean-
time, my dear young lady, it is better that you
should obey him, for the present, at least, so far
as retiring from the room," said Doctor Williams.

Clara immediately arose, and requesting Mrs.
Rocks to accompany her, withdrew from the
library.

Doctor Williams then said:
"I advised the retirement of the young lady,
having a communication to make, the hearing
of which in a mixed company, might have cost
her an innocent blush. But first I would ask
you, Colonel Le Noir—what are those circum-
stances to which you allude which render Miss
Day's residence here, in her paternal man-
sion, with her old and faithful friends, so im-
proper?" inquired Doctor Williams, courteously.

"The growing intimacy, sir, between herself
and a very objectionable party—this young man
Rocks!" replied Colonel Le Noir.

"Ah, and is that all?"

"It is enough, sir!" said Colonel Le Noir,
loftily.

"Then, suppose I should inform you, sir, that
this young man, Dr. Rocks, was brought up
and educated at Doctor Day's cost, and under
his own immediate eye?"

"Then, sir, you would only inform me that
an eccentric gentleman of fortune had done—
what eccentric gentlemen of fortune will some-
times do—educated a pauper."

At this opprobrious epithet, Traverse, with flushed
face, started to his feet.

"Sit down, my boy, sit down; leave me to deal
with this man," said Doctor Williams, forcing
Traverse back into his seat. Then turning to
Colonel Le Noir, he said:

"But, suppose, sir, that such was the estima-
tion in which Doctor Day held the moral and in-
tellectual worth of his young protegee, that he
actually gave him his daughter?"

"I cannot suppose an impossibility, Doctor
Williams," replied Colonel Le Noir, haughtily.

"Then, sir, I have the pleasure of assisting

you a little by a prodigy, that you denominate an impossibility! Clara Day and Traverser Rocks were betrothed with full knowledge and cordial approbation of the young lady's father!"

"Impossible! preposterous! I shall countenance no such ridiculous absurdity!" said Colonel Le Noir, growing red in the face.

"Miss Day, Doctor Rocks, Mrs. Rocks and myself are witnesses to that fact."

"The young lady and the young man are parties immediately concerned—they cannot be received as witnesses in their own case: Mrs. Rocks is too much in their interest for her evidence to be taken; you, sir, I consider the dupe of these cunning conspirators—mother and son," replied Colonel Le Noir, firmly.

"But," said Doctor Williams, almost out of patience, "I do not depend upon the words of Miss Day and her friends, although I hold their veracity to be above question; I had Doctor mentioned the existing betrothal as the very reason why Clara should remain here in the care of her future mother-in-law."

"Then, sir, that doctor should have spoken reason for believing him to have been deranged in his last moments! You need give yourself no farther trouble! I shall act upon the authority of this instrument which I hold in my hand," replied Colonel Le Noir, haughtily.

"Then, as the depository of the dying man's last wishes, and as the next friend of his injured daughter, I shall make an appeal to the Orphans' Court," said Doctor Williams, coldly.

"You can do as you please about that; but to the meanwhile, acting upon the authority of the ward for my own home."

"There may be time to arrest that journey," said Doctor Williams, arising and taking his hat to go.

In the passage he met Mrs. Rocks.

"Dear Doctor Williams," said Mrs. Rocks, earnestly, "pray come up to poor Clara's room, and speak to her, if you can possibly say anything to comfort her; she is weeping herself into a fit of illness, at the bare thought of being, so soon after her dreadful bereavement, torn away from her home and friends."

"But, sir, no use in weeping! all will yet be right!"

"You have persuaded that man to permit her to remain here, then?" said Mrs. Rocks, gladly.

"Persuaded him?" no, nor even undertaken to do so! I never saw him before to-day, yet I would venture to say, from what I have now seen of him, that he never was persuaded by any agent except his own passions and interests, to any act whatever. No, I have endeavored to show him that we have *law* as well as justice on our side, and even now I am afraid I shall have to take the case before the Orphans' Court before I can convince him. He purposes removing Clara Judge of the Orphans' Court to-night, take out a habeas corpus, ordering Le Noir to bring his ward into court, and serve it on him as he passes through Staunton on his way home."

"But is there no way of preventing him from morning?"

"No good way." No, Madam, it is best that all things should be done decently and in order. I advise you, as I shall also advise my young friends, Traverser and Clara, not to injure their own cause by unwelcome impudence or opposition. We should go before the Orphans' Court with the very best aspect."

"Come, then, and talk to Clara. She has the most painful antipathy to the man who claims the custody of her person, as well as the most distressing reluctance to leaving her dear home and friends; and all this in addition to her recent heavy affliction, almost overwhelms the poor child!" said Mrs. Rocks, weeping.

"I will go at once and do what I can to soothe her," said Doctor Williams, following Mrs. Rocks, who led him up to Clara's room.

They found her prostrate upon her bed, crushed with grief.

"Come, come, my dear girl, this is too bad! It is not like the usual noble fortitude of our Clara," said the old man, kindly taking her hand.

"Oh, Doctor, forgive—forgive me! but my

courage must have been very small, for I fear it is all gone. But then, indeed, everything comes on me at once. My dear, dear father's death; then the approaching departure and expected long absence of Traverser! All that was grievous home of my childhood, and from the friend that has always been a mother to me, and by a man from whom every true, good instinct of my nature teaches me to shrink. I, who have always had full liberty in the house of my dear father, to be forced away by this man, as if I were his slave!" exclaimed Clara, bursting into fresh tears of indignation and grief.

Clara, my dear, dear girl! this impatience and rebellion is so unlike your gentle nature, that I can scarcely recognize you for the mild and dignified daughter of my old friend! Clara, if I should think your dear father would be grieved to see you thus!" said the old man in gentle rebuke, that immediately took effect upon the meek and contentious maiden.

"Oh! I feel—I feel that I am doing very wrong, but I cannot help it. I scarcely know myself in this agony of mingled grief, indignation, and terror, yes, *terror*, for every instinct of my nature teaches me to distrust and fear that man, in whom my father must have been greatly deceived before he could have entrusted him with the guardianship of his only child!"

"I think that is likely," said the old man, "yet, my dear, even in respect to your dear father's memory, you must try to bear this trial patiently."

"Oh, yes! I know I must! Dear father, if you can look down and see me now, forgive your poor Clara, her anger and her impatience. She will try to be worthy of the rearing you have given her, and to bear even this great trial, with the spirit worthy of your daughter!" said Clara, within her heart, then speaking up, she said, "You shall have no more reason to reproach me, Doctor Williams."

"That is my brave girl! That is my dear Clara Day! And now, when your guardian directs you to prepare yourself for your journey, obey him—go with him without making any objection. I purpose to arrest your journey at Staunton with a *habeas corpus* that he dare not resist, and which shall compel him to bring you into the Orphans' Court! There our side shall be heard, and the decision will rest with the judge."

"And all will be well! Oh, say that, sir! to give me the courage to act with becoming docility," pleaded Clara.

"I have not a doubt in this world that it will all be right! for however Colonel Le Noir may choose to disregard the last wishes of your father, not the least idea that the judge will pass them over! on the contrary, I feel persuaded that he will confirm them by sending you back here to your beloved home."

"Oh, may heaven grant it," said Clara.

"Yes, yes, be cheerful, my dear; trust in Providence, and expect nothing short of the best. And now I dare not tarry longer with you, for I see, my dear! keep up a good heart! Good-old man, cheerfully, pressing her hand and taking his leave."

Mrs. Rocks accompanied him to the hall-door, for the sake of your young spirits also to bed early! To-morrow, when she thinks she is about to be torn from you forever, remember her that I shall meet the carriage at Staunton with a power that shall turn the horses' heads."

And so saying, the worthy old gentleman departed.

As Marah Rocks looked after him, she also saw with alarm that Colonel Le Noir had mounted his horse and galloped off in the direction of Staunton, as if impelled by the most urgent haste.

She returned to the bedside of Clara, and left her no more that night. As the colonel did not return to supper, they, the family party, had their tea in Clara's room.

Late at night Mrs. Rocks heard Colonel Le Noir come into the house and enter his chamber.

Poor Clara slept no more that night; anxiety despite all her efforts, kept her wide awake. Yet, though anxious and wakeful, yet by prayer and

endeavor she had brought her mind into a patient and submissive mood, so that when a servant knocked at her door in the morning with a message from Colonel Le Noir that she should be ready to set forth immediately after breakfast, she lay she arose and commenced her toilet.

All the family met for the last time around the board. The party was constrained. The meal was a gloomy one. On rising from the table Colonel Le Noir informed his ward that his travelling carriage was waiting, and that her luggage was already on, and requested her to put on her bonnet and mantle, and take leave of her servants.

Clara turned to obey. Traverser went to her side, and whispered:

"Take courage, dear love; my horse is saddled; I shall ride in attendance upon the carriage, whether that man likes it or not; nor lose sight of you for one moment until we meet Williams with his *habeas corpus*."

"Nor even then, dear Traverser! nor even then! I take me back to this dear, dear home!" murmured Clara in reply.

"Yes," said dear girl. There, be cheerful, whispered the young man, as he pressed her hand and released it.

Colonel Le Noir had been a silent but frowning spectator of this little scene, and now that Clara called the young man, attended by Mrs. Rocks, he said:

"You will be kind as to stop here a moment, Mrs. Rocks, and you also, young man."

The mother and son paused to hear what he should have to say.

"I believe it is the custom here, in discharging domestics, to give a month's warning, or, in lieu of that, to pay a month's wages in advance. There, woman, is the money. You will oblige me by leaving the house to-day, together with your son and all your other trumpery—as the premises are put in charge of an agent, who will be here after-noon, clothed with authority to eject all loiterers and intruders."

While the Colonel spoke, Marah Rocks gazed at him in a panic from which she seemed unable to rouse herself, until Traverser gravely took her hand, saying:

"My dear mother, let me conduct you from the presence of this man, who does not know how to behave himself towards women. Leave me to talk with him, and do you, dear mother, go to Miss Day, who I know is waiting for you."

Marah Rocks mechanically complied, and allowed Traverser to lead her from the room.

When he returned, he went up to Colonel Le Noir, and standing before him and looking him full and sternly in the face, said, as sternly:

"Colonel Le Noir, my mother will remain here, and abide the decision of the Orphans' Court; until that has been decided, she does not stir at your or any man's bidding."

"Villain! out of my way!" sneered Le Noir, endeavoring to pass him.

Traverser prevented him, saying:

"Sir, in consideration of your age, which should be venerable, your position which should prove you honorable, and of this sacred house of mourning in which you stand, I have endeavored to meet all the incivilities you have offered me with forbearance. But, sir, I am here to defend my mother's rights and to protect her from insult. And I tell you plainly that you have affronted her for the very last time. One more word or look of insult levelled at Marah Rocks, and neither your age, position, nor this sacred roof shall protect you from personal chastisement at the hands of her son."

Le Noir, who had listened in angry scorn, with many an ejaculation of contempt, now at the conclusion which so galled his pride, broke out furiously, with:

"Sir, you are a bully! If you were a gentleman I would call you out."

"And I should not come if you did, sir. Drelling is an Christian, barbarous, and abominable in the sight of God and all good men. For the rest you may call me anything you please; but do not again insult my mother, for if you do, I shall hold it a Christian duty to teach you better manners," said Traverser, coolly taking his hat and walking from the room.

He mounted his horse, and stood ready to attend Clara to Staunton.

brought her mind into a patient mood, so that when a servant came in the morning with a message from the Lord, she should be immediately after breakfast, she obeyed him, and without delay set for the last time around the house, and then she was constrained. The meal was over, and then she saw the Lord's ward, that his travelling bag, and that her baggage was waiting for her to put on her bonnet and take leave of her servants. She obeyed. Traverser went to her room; my horse is saddled; I place upon the carriage, whether it is not; nor lose sight of it until we meet Williams with our Traverser, nor even then I do not to the court and be ready to leave, dear home!" murmured

girl. There, be cheerful, my man, as he pressed her hand and she was silent but frowning scene, and now that Clara attended by Mrs. Rocks, he said: "As to stop here a moment, also, young man."

As to stop here a moment, also, young man."

As to stop here a moment, also, young man."

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As to stop here a moment, also, young man."

As to stop here a moment, also, young man."

Colonel Le Noir ground his teeth in impatient rage, muttering:

"Take care, young man. I shall live to be revenged upon you yet for these affronts!"

And his dastard heart burned with the fiercer malignity that he had not dared to meet the eagle eye or encounter the strong arm of the upright and stalwart young man. Gnashing his teeth with ill-suppressed fury, he strode into the hall just as Mrs. Rocks, and Clara in her travelling dress, descended the stairs.

Clara threw her arms around Mrs. Rocks's neck, and weeping, said:

"Good-bye! dear, best friend! good-bye! Heaven grant it may not be for long. Oh, pray for me that I may be sent back to you!"

"May the Lord have you in His holy keeping, my child! I shall pray until I hear from you!" said Maria, kissing and releasing her.

Colonel Le Noir then took her by the hand, led her out, and put her into the carriage.

Just before entering, Clara had turned to take a last look at her old home; all friends and servants, noticed the sorrowful, anxious, almost despairing look of her pale face, which seemed to ask:

"Ah, shall I ever, ever return to you, dear old home, and dear familiar friends?"

In another instant, who had disappeared within the carriage—which immediately rolled off.

As the carriage was heavily laden, and the road was in a very bad condition, it was a full hour before they reached the town of Stanton.

As the carriage drew up for a few moments before the door of the principal hotel, and Colonel Le Noir was in the act of stepping out, a sheriff's officer, accompanied by Dr. Williams, approached, and served upon the Colonel a writ of *Habeas Corpus*, commanding him to bring his ward, Clara Day, into court.

Colonel Le Noir laughed scornfully, saying:

"And do any of you imagine this will serve your purposes? Ha! ha! the most that it can do will be to delay my journey for a few hours, until the decision of the judge, which will only serve to confirm my authority beyond all future possibility of questioning."

"We will see that," said Dr. Williams.

"Drive to the court-house," ordered Colonel Le Noir.

And the carriage, attended by Traverser Rocks, Dr. Williams, and the sheriff's officer, each on horseback, drove thither.

And now, reader, I will not trouble you with a detailed account of this trial. Clara, clothed in deep mourning, and looking pale and terrified, was led into the court-room on the arm of her guardian. She was followed closely by her friends Traverser Rocks and Dr. Williams, each of whom whispered encouraging words to the orphan.

As the court had no pressing business on its hands, the case was immediately taken up, the will was read and attested by the attorney, who had drawn it up, and the witnesses who had signed it. Then the evidence of Dr. Williams and Dr. Rocks was taken concerning the last verbal instructions of the deceased. The case occupied about three hours, at the end of which the judge gave a decision in favor of Colonel Le Noir.

This judgment carried consternation to the heart of Clara and all her friends.

Clara herself sank nearly fainting in the arms of her old friend, the venerable Dr. Williams.

Traverser, in bitterness of spirit, approached and bent over her.

Colonel Le Noir spoke to the judge.

"I deeply thank your honor for the prompt hearing and equally prompt decision of this case, and I will beg your honor to order the sheriff and his officers to see your judgment carried into effect, as I foresee violent opposition, and wish to prevent trouble."

"Certainly," Mr. Sheriff, you will see that Colonel Le Noir is put in possession of his ward, and protected in that right until he shall have pleased her in security," said the judge.

Clara, on hearing these words, lifted her head from the old man's bosom, nerved her gentle heart; and in a clear, sweet, steady voice, said:

"It is needless precaution, your honor; my friends are no law-breakers; and since the Court has given me into the custody of my guardian,

I do not dispute his judgment—I yield myself up to Colonel Le Noir."

"You do well, young lady," said the judge.

"I am pleased, Miss Day, to see that you understand and perform your duty; believe me, I shall do all that I can to make you happy," said Colonel Le Noir.

Clara replied by a gentle nod; and then, with a slight blush mantling her pure cheeks, she advanced a step, and placed herself immediately in front of the judge, saying:

"But there is a word that I would speak to your honor."

"Say on, young lady," said the judge.

And as she stood there in her deep mourning dress, with her fair hair unbound and floating softly around her pale, sweet face, every eye in that court was spell-bound by her almost unearthly beauty. Before proceeding with what she was about to say she turned upon Traverser a look that brought him immediately to her side.

"Your honor," she began, in a low, sweet, clear tone, "I owe it to Doctor Rocks here present, who has been sadly misrepresented to you, to say (what under less serious circumstances I should have dared to say to your honor) that I am his betrothed wife—sacredly betrothed to him by almost the last act of my dear father's life. I hold this engagement to be so holy that no earthly tribunal can break or disturb it. And while I bend to your honor's decision, and yield myself to the custody of my dear father, for the period of my minority, I here declare to all who may be interested, that I hold my hand and heart irrevocably pledged to Doctor Rocks, and that, as his betrothed wife, I shall consider myself bound to correspond with him regularly, and to receive him as often as he will seek my society, until my majority, when I and all that I possess will become his own. And these words I repeat in justice to my dear lost father and his friend Traverser Rocks, and also to myself, that hereafter no one may venture to accuse me of clandestine proceedings, or distort my actions into improprieties, or in any manner call in question the conduct of my father's daughter."

And, with another gentle bow, Clara retired to the side of her old friend.

"You are likely to have a troublesome charge in your ward," said the sheriff apart to the colonel, who shrugged his shoulders by way of reply.

The heart of Traverser was torn by many conflicting passions, emotions, and impulses; there was indignation at the decision of the court; grief for the loss of Clara, and dread for her future!

One instant he felt a temptation to denounce the guardian as a villain and to charge the judge with being a corrupt politician, whose decisions were swayed by party interests.

The next moment he felt an impulse to catch Clara up in his arms, fight his way through the crowd and carry her off. But all these wild emotions, passions and impulses he succeeded in controlling.

Too well he knew that rage, do violence, or commit extravagance as he might, the law would take its course all the same.

While his heart was torn in this manner Colonel Le Noir was urging the departure of his ward. And Clara came to her lover's side and said gravely and sweetly:

"The time, you see, has decided against us, dear Traverser! let us bend gracefully to a decree that we cannot annul; it cannot, at least, alter our sacred relations; nor can anything on earth shake our steadfast faith in each other; let us take comfort in that, and in the thought that the years will surely roll round at length and bring the time that shall unite us."

"Oh, my angel-girl! my angel-girl! your patient heroism puts me to the blush, for my heart is crushed in my bosom and my firmness quite gone!" said Traverser, in a broken voice.

"You will gain firmness, dear Traverser," said the patient; "patient! you should have heard me last night! I was so impatient that doctor Williams had to lecture me. But it would be strange if one did not learn something by suffering. I have been trying all night and day to school my heart to submission, and I hope I have succeeded, Traverser. Bless me and bid me good-bye."

"The Lord forever bless and keep you, my own dear angel, Clara!" burst from the lips of Traverser; "the Lord abundantly bless you!"

"And you!" said Clara.

"Good-bye! good-bye!"

"Good-bye."

And thus they parted.

Clara was hurried away and put into the carriage by her guardian.

And no one but the Lord knew how much it had cost that poor girl to maintain her fortitude during that trying scene. She had controlled herself for the sake of her friends. But now, when she found herself in the carriage, her long-strained nerves gave way—she sank exhausted and prostrated into the corner of her seat, in the midst of collapse of woe.

But leaving the travellers to pursue their journey, we must go back to Traverser.

Almost broken-hearted, Traverser returned to Willow Heights to convey the sad tidings of his disappointment to his mother's ear.

Mariah Rocks was so overwhelmed with grief at the news, that she was several hours incapable of action.

The arrival of the house-agent was the first event that recalled her to her senses.

She aroused herself to action, and assisted by Traverser, set to work to pack up her own and his wardrobe, and other personal effects.

And the next morning Mariah Rocks was re-established in her cottage.

And the next evening having equally divided their little capital, the mother and son parted—Traverser, by her express desire, keeping to his original plan, to cut out for the Far West.

CHAPTER XXXII.

OLD HURRICANE STORIES.

"At this air still flamed up with ire! His great chest heaved, his eyes flashed fire, The crimson that suffused his face, To deepest purple now gave place."

Who can describe the frenzy of Old Hurricane upon discovering the fraud that had been practised upon him by Black Donald?

It was told him the next morning in his tent, at his breakfast table, in the presence of his assembled family, by the reverend Mr. Goodwin.

Upon first hearing it, he was incapable of any thing but blank staring, until it seemed as though his eyes must start from their sockets!

Then his passion, "not loud but deep," found utterance only in emphatic thumps of his walking stick upon the ground.

Then as the huge emotion worked upwards, it broke out in grunts, groans, and inarticulate exclamations.

Finally it burst forth as follows:

"Ugh! ugh! ugh! Fool! dolt! blockhead! brute that I've been!—I wish somebody would punch my wooden head!—I didn't think the demon himself could have deceived me so! Ugh!—Nobody but the demon could have done this. And he is the demon! the very demon himself! he does not disguise he transforms himself! Ugh! ugh! ugh! that I should have been such a donkey."

"Sir, compose yourself, we are all liable to suffer deception," said Mr. Goodwin.

"Sir," broke forth Old Hurricane, in fury—"that wretch has cut at my table! has drank wine with me! has slept in my bed! Ugh! ugh! ugh!"

"Believing him to be what he seemed, sir, you intended to him the rights of hospitality; you have nothing to blame yourself with."

"Demmy, sir, I did more than that—I have coddled him up with negus! I've pampered him up with possets and put him to sleep in my own bed! Yes, sir! and more!—look there at Mrs. Conditment, sir, the way in which she worshipped that villain was a sight to behold," said Old Hurricane, jumping up and stamping around the tent in fury.

"Oh, Mr. Goodwin, sir, how could I help it when I thought he was such a precious saint?"

"Yes, sir, when 'his Reverence' would be tired of delivering a long-winded mid-day discourse, Mrs. Conditment, sir, would take him in to her own tent, make him lie down on her own cot, and set my niece to bathing his head with cologne and her maid to fanning him, while she

l'animal le Noir's coachman. And how one day last month his carriage, not went two or three the country beyond Blanton, and then came home, full in the carriage this lovely was dressed in the deapest of all the way. They 'speaks has lost all her friends, by

I. My life on it, another villain had better be dead than in atrocious villain and consummated Old Hurricane, passing on of his favorite horses, one of in the end, he found galloped on her own, he flew into a towering, his unfortunate groom by blithely blind fury could suggest, valued whole bones, to vacate, and never dare to set foot in, as he valued his life, an uttering to himself: "I'm not a man or woman left on my word, I'll well that his tempestuous plably forget all about it, as shortly sealed at the supper-table, towards which the old

Major Warfield sat at supper in the room of the Hidden House, reasons for keeping Cap. La-labor, last she should insist in and being "coachable." "I'm not a man or woman left on my word, I'll well that his tempestuous plably forget all about it, as shortly sealed at the supper-table, towards which the old

face of earth do you mean and of "stains into my room and I, an ostler or a cor- to entertain a party of play, in astonishment, turning, where she stood bathing

as, whether you're an os- w's don't tend for to be wittle, arter findin' out wille, can be! Ders day is! am alone, Miss Cater- pak, firmly.

"Patty," she said, "you my waiting maid, I'm Miss Caterpillar, if you outtin' arter, you ought to know dere's wittle

ligned to you, Patty, but I and I do not like the bed-room, so take the in the passage table until

ame back smiling and you born de news?"

new neighbor—a bootful a pieder in a girl edged snowy skin, and sky-blue y hair, like de princess out, all in deep mournin', in' all alone down there along of old Colonel Le light, and the ghost as a night, just for all the as in de ore's castle!"

this rigmarole about? aning?" "de dressed Truffel livin' at de Hidden

de, Patty?" "as!" "if I! I shall certainly franger," said Capitola, Miss, don't you do no ill me! I heard him

trustin all de men and maids, how if day telled you anything 'bout de new neighbor, how he'd 'kin dem alive!"

"You't be skin you?" asked Cap. "No, Miss, not less you 'form ag'in me, case he didn't tell me not to tell you, case you see he didn't think how I knowed! But, leavstays, I know from what I heard, ose Marse wouldn't have you to know nobin' 'bout it, no, not for de whole wool!"

"He does not want me to call at the Hidden House! That's it! Now, why doesn't he wish me to call there? I shall have to go in order to find out, and so I will," thought Cap.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

CAP'S VISIT TO THE HIDDEN HOUSE.

And such a night! "she" took the road in an under plot, and was about to take the wind blow as 'twas blown its last; The rattling showers rose on the blast; The speedy gleams the darkness swallowed; Loud, deep and low the thunder belted; And straight a child might understand That night had business on his hand. —Dumas.

A week passed before Capitola carried her resolution of calling upon the inmates of the Hidden House, into effect. It was in fact a hot, dry, oppressive season, the last few days of August, when all people, even the restless Capitola, preferred the coolness and repose of indoors. But that she should stay at home more than a week was a moral and physical impossibility. So on Thursday afternoon, when Major Warfield set out on horseback to visit his mail, Capitola ordered her horse to be saddled and brought up that she might take an afternoon's ride.

"Now, please, my dear child, don't go far," said Mrs. Condiment, "for besides that your uncle does not approve of your riding alone, you must hurry back to avoid the storm."

"Storm, Mrs. Condiment, why, bless your dear old heart, there has not been a storm these four weeks!" said Capitola, almost indignant that such an absurd objection to a long ride should be raised.

"The more reason, my child, that we should have a very severe one when it does come, and I think it will be upon us before sunset, so I advise you to hurry home."

"Why, Mrs. Condiment! there's not a cloud in the sky!"

"So much the worse, my dear. The blackest cloud that ever gathered is not so ominous of mischief as this dull, coppery sky and still atmosphere; and if forty years' observation of weather signs goes for anything, I tell you that we are going to have the awfullest storm that ever gathered in the heavens! Why, look out of that window! the very birds and beasts know it, and instinctively seek shelter!—look at that flock of crows flying home! see how the dumb beasts come trooping towards their sheds! Capitola, you had better give up going altogether, my dear."

"There! I thought all this talk tended to keeping me from going, but I can't stay, Mrs. Condiment! Good Mrs. Condiment, I can't!"

"But, my dear, if you should be caught out in the storm!"

"Why, I don't know but I should like it! What harm could it do me? I'm not soluble in water—rain won't melt me away! I think, upon the whole, I rather prefer being caught in the storm!" said Cap. peremptorily.

"Well, well, there's no need of that; you may ride as far as the river's bank and back again in time to escape, if you choose," said Mrs. Condiment, who saw that her troublesome charge was bent upon the frolic.

And Cap., seeing her horse approach, led by one of the grooms, ran up stairs, donned her riding-habit, hat and gloves, ran down again, sprang into her saddle, and was off, galloping away towards the river before Mrs. Condiment could add another word of warning.

She had been gone about an hour when the sky suddenly darkened, the wind rose, and the thunder rolled in prelude to the storm.

Meeting poor old Eey in the shrubbery, he stormed out upon him with:

"What are you lounging there for, you old idiot! you old sky-gazing lunatic! don't you see we are going to have an awful blow? Begone with you, and see that the cattle are all under shelter. Off, I say, or,—" he rode towards Bill Eey, but the old man exclaimed:

"Yes, sir! yes, sir! in coorse, sir!" dashed his head, and ran off in good time.

Major Warfield quickened his horse's steps and rode to the house, dismounted and threw the reins to the stable boy, exclaiming:

"My beast is dripping with perspiration—rub him down well, you know, or I'll impale you!"

Striding into the hall, he threw down his riding-whip, pulled off his gloves, and called:

"Wool! Wool, you scoundrel, close every door and window in the house; call all the servants together in the dining-room; we're going to have one of the worst tempests that ever rained."

"Wool flow to do his bidding."

"Mrs. Condiment, mum," said the old man, striding into the sitting-room—"Mrs. Condiment, mum, tell Miss Black to come down from her room until the storm is over; the upper chambers of this old house are not safe in a tempest. Well, mum, why don't you go or send Pipapat?"

"Major Warfield, sir, I'm very sorry, but Miss Black has not come in yet," said Mrs. Condiment, who had just suffered extreme anxiety upon account of Capitola.

"Not come in yet! Demmy, mum! do you tell me she has gone out!" cried Old Hurricane, in a voice of thunder, gathering his brows into a dark frown, and striking his cane angrily upon the floor.

"Yes, sir, I am sorry to say she rode out about an hour ago and has not returned," said Mrs. Condiment, summoning all her firmness to meet Old Hurricane's roused wrath.

"Ma'am! you venture to stand there before my face and tell me composedly that you permitted Miss Black to go off alone in the face of such a storm as this!" roared Old Hurricane.

"Sir, I could not help it," said the old lady.

"Demmy, mum, you should have helped it. A woman of your age to stand there and tell me that she could not prevent a young creature like Capitola from going out alone in a storm!"

"Me? Demmy, I should think so, but that is not the question. You—"

He was interrupted by a blinding flash of lightning, followed immediately by an awful peal of thunder and a sudden fall of rain.

Old Hurricane sprang up as though he had been shot off his chair, and trotted up and down the room exclaiming:

"And she! she out in all this storm! Mrs. Condiment, mum, you deserve to be dashed! Yes, mum, you do! Wool! Wool! you diabolical villain!"

dodged and ran out in time to escape a blow that might have put a period to his mortal career.

But let no one suppose that honest Wool took the road that night. He simply ran down stairs and hid himself comfortably in the lowest regions of the house, there to tarry until the storm, social and atmospheric, should be over.

Meanwhile the night deepened—the storm raged without, and Old Hurricane raged within.

The lightning flashed, bare upon bare, with blinding glare. The thunder broke crash upon crash, with deafening roar. The wind gathered all its force, cannonaded the old walls as though it would batter down the house. The rain fell in floods. In the midst of all, the Demon's hum, swollen to a torrent, was heard like the voice of a roaring lion, seeking whom he might devour."

Old Hurricane strode up and down the floor, groaning, swearing, threatening, and at every fresh blast of the storm without, breaking forth into fury.

Mrs. Condiment sat crouched in a corner, praying fervently every time the lightning blazed into the room, longing to go and join the men and maids in the next apartment, yet fearing to stir from her seat lest she should attract Old Hurricane's attention, and draw down upon herself the more terrible thunder and lightning of his wrath. But to escape Old Hurricane's violence was not in the power of mortal man or woman. Soon the very stillness exasperated him, and he broke forth into his wrath:

"Mrs. Condiment, mum, I don't know how you can bear to sit there so quietly and listen to this storm, knowing that the poor child is exposed to it."

"Major Warfield, would it do any good for me to jump up and trot up and down the floor, and go on as you do, even supposing I had the strength?" inquired the meek old lady, thoroughly provoked at his injustice.

"I'd like to see you show a little more feeling. You are a perfect barbarian. Oh Cap, my darling, where are you now? Heavens! what a blast was that! enough to shake the house about our ears! I wish it would—blamed if I don't."

"Oh, Major, don't say such awful things, nor make such awful wishes," said the appalled old lady, "you don't know what you might bring down upon us."

"No, nor care; if the old house should tumble in, it would bury under its ruins a precious lot of good-for-nothing people, unfit to live. Heavens! what a flash of lightning! Oh, Cap, my darling, where are you in this storm? Mrs. Condiment, mum, if any harm comes to Capitola this night, I'll have you indicted for manslaughter."

"Major Warfield, if it is all on Miss Black's account that you are raving and raging so, I think it is quite vain of you; for any young woman caught out in a storm would know enough to get into shelter; especially would Miss Black, who is a young lady of great courage and presence of mind, as we know. She has surely gone into some house to remain until the storm is over," said Mrs. Condiment, soothingly.

This speech, so well intended, exasperated Old Hurricane more than all the rest. Stopping and striking his cane upon the floor, he roared forth:

"Hang it, mum! hold your foolish old tongue! You know nothing about it. Capitola is exposed to more serious danger than the elements. Perils of all sorts surround her. She should never, rain or shine, go out alone. Oh, the little villain! the little witch! the little demon! if even I get her safe in this house again, won't I lock her up and keep her on bread and water until she learns to behave herself!"

Here again a blinding flash of lightning, a deafening peal of thunder, a terrific blast of wind and flood of rain suddenly arrested his speech.

"Oh, my Cap! my dear Cap! I needn't threaten you! I shall never have the chance to be cruel to you again—never. You will perish in this terrible storm, and then—and then my tough old heart will break, it will—will, Cap. But, Demmy, before it does, I will break the necks of every man and woman in this house, old and young. Hear it, Heaven and Earth, for I'll do it!"

All things must have an end. So, as the hours passed on, the storm having spent all its fury, gradually grumbled itself into silence.

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of blood is stamped
said Cap.

ture of the crimson
in Englishman!"

are fore-doomed to
dead, I'll have his
omplished Cap.

o belidme,
cause you see, if we
beat you hollow at

Thy blood is cold!
in those eyes

doomed! doomed!"
into her hat.

neck of her horse,
Nick's wife who
and now, indeed,
on House this af-

and the path that
Dowd, and then
rain-torrent collected

opposite mountain,
many a sinuous
thicket that im-

mediately surrounded the Hidden House—until
it finally jostled through a subterranean channel
into the Devil's Punch Bowl.

Capitola was now, unconsciously, upon the
very spot where, seventeen years before, the old
nurse had been forcibly stopped and compelled to
attend the unknown lady.

As Capitola pursued the path that wound low-
er and lower into the dark valley, the gloom of
the thicket deepened. Her thoughts ran on all
the horrible traditions connected with the Hidden
House and Hollow—the murder and robbery of
the poor peddler; the mysterious assassination of
Engene Le Noir; the sudden disappearance of his
youthful wife; the strange sights and sounds
reported to be heard and seen about the mansion;
the spectral light at the upper gable window; the
white form seen flitting through the chamber;
the pale lady that in the dead of night drew the
curtains of a guest that once had slept there;

and above all, Capitola thought of that child
strange girl, who was an inmate of that sinful
and accursed house. And while these thoughts
absorbed her mind, suddenly, in a turning of the
path, she came full upon the gloomy building.

CHAPTER XXXV.

THE HIDDEN HOUSE.

The very stains and fractures on the wall,
Assuming features solemn and terrific,
Hinted some tragedy of that old hall
Looked up in morbidly

Prophetic hints that filled the soul with dread;
Not to one gloomy window pointing moody;
The white some secret inspiration said,
That chamber is the ghastly! Hoan.

The Hidden House was a large, irregular edifice,
of dark red sandstone with its walls covered closely
with the clinging ivy, that had been clipped away
only from a few of the doors and windows, and its
roof overhanged by the top branches of gigantic
oaks and elms that clustered around and nearly
concealed the building.

It might have been a long-forsaken house for
any sign of human habitation that was to be seen
about it. All was silent, solitary and gloomy.

As Capitola drew up to her horse to gaze upon its
sombre walls, she wondered which was the win-
dow at which the spectral light and ghostly face
had been seen. She soon believed that she had
found it.

At the highest point of the building, immedi-
ately under the sharp angle of the roof, in the
pale and nearest view, was a solitary window
The ivy that clung tightly to the stone, covered
every portion of the wall at this end, was clipped
away from that high-placed, dark and lonely win-
dow by which Capitola's eyes were strangely fas-
cinated.

While thus she gazed in wonder, interest and
curiosity, though without the least degree of super-
stitions dread, a vision flashed upon her sight,
that sent the blood from her ruddy cheek to her
brave heart, and shook the foundations of her un-
belief!

For while she gazed, suddenly that dark win-
dow was illuminated by a strange, unearthly light
that streamed forth into the gloomy evening air,
and touched with its flame the quivering leaves
of every tree in the brilliant line! In the midst
of this lighted window appeared a white female
face wild with woe! And then the face suddenly
vanished and the light was swallowed up in dark-
ness!

Capitola remained transfixed! "Great Heaven!"
she thought, "can these things really be! Here the ghastly traditions
of this world, truth in them at last! When I
heard this story of the haunted window I thought
some one had surely imagined or invented it! Now
I have seen for myself! but if I were to tell
what I have seen not one in a hundred would
believe me!"

While these startling thoughts disturbed her
usually well-balanced mind, a vivid flash of light-
ning, accompanied by a tremendous peal of thun-
der and a heavy fall of rain, roused her into re-
newed activity.

"Gyp, my boy, the storm is upon us sure
enough! We shall catch it all around! get well
drowned, beaten and buffeted here, and well abused
when we get home. Meantime, Gyp, which is the

best way to escape it?"

"Well, I like this upon my word I do!"
said Cap., composedly.

Without replying the strange woman seized
her right hand, forcibly opened it, gazed into the
palm, and then flinging it back with a shudder,
exclaimed:

"Capitola, what brought you under this roof?
Away! Begone! Mount your horse and fly while
there is yet time."

"What! expose myself again to the storm? I
won't, and that's flat," said Cap.

"Girl! girl! there are worse dangers in the
world than any to be feared from thunder, light-
ning, rain or wind."

"Very well, then, when I meet them it will be
time enough to deal with them meanwhile the
stormy night and soaked clothing are very pain-
able evils, and as I see no good end to be gained
by my longer enduring them, I will just beg you
to stop, soothingly saying—as I have had enough of
that from another old wretch—and be so good as
to permit me to change my clothes."

"It is medicinal! You shall not stay here,"
cried the woman, in a harsh voice.

"And I tell you I will! You are not the head
of the family, and I do not intend to be turned
out by you."

With she spoke, a servant crossed the hall, and
the woman, whispering Capitola around until her
back was turned, and her face concealed, went to
speak to the new comer.

"When will your master be here?" Capitola
heard her inquire.

Not a creature was to be seen; every door and
window was closely shut. Dismounting, Capitola
led her horse under the shelter of a thickly leaved
old oak tree, secured him, and then holding up her
saturated skirt with one hand and holding on her
cap with the other, she went up some mouldering
stone steps to an old stone portico, and seizing
the heavy iron knocker of a great black oak double
door, she knocked loudly enough to awaken all the
moulting dragons.

She waited a few minutes for an answer, but
receiving none, she knocked again more loudly
than before. Still there was no reply. And
growing impatient, she seized the knocker with
both hands and exerting all her strength, made
the old iron ring again.

This brought a response. The door was un-
locked and angrily jerked open, by a short, stout
formed, beetle-browed, stern-looking woman
clothed in a black stuff gown, and having a stiff
muslin cap upon her head.

"Who are you? What do you want here?"
harshly demanded this woman, whom Capitola
distinctly recognized as Dorky Knight, the
morose housekeeper of the Hidden House.

"Who am I? What do I want? Old Nick fly
away with you, it's plain enough to be seen, who
I am and what I want. I am a young woman,
caught out in the storm, and I want shelter!"
said Cap., indignantly. And her words were en-
dowed by a fierce burst of the tempest in light-
ning, thunder, rain and wind.

"Come in then, and when you ask favors learn
to keep a civil tongue in your head," said the
woman sternly, taking the guest by the hand and
pulling her in, and shutting and locking the door.

"Favor! plague on you for a beastress! I
asked no favor! Every storm-beaten traveller
has a right to shelter under the first roof that
offers, and none but a curmudgeon would think
of calling it a favor! And as for keeping a civil
tongue in my head, I'll do it when you set me the
example!" said Cap.

"Who are you?" again demanded the woman.
"I see you are no Arabian in your notions
about hospitality! Those pagans entertain a guest
without asking him a single question; and though
he were their bitterest foe, they consider him,
while he rests beneath their tent, sacred from in-
trusion."

"That's because they are pagans," said Dorky.
"But as I am a Christian, I'd thank you to let me
know who it is that I have received under this roof."

"My name," said our heroine impatiently, "is
Capitola Black! I live with my uncle, Major
Warfield, at Hurricane Hall. And now I should
thank your ladyship to send some one to put
away my horse, while you yourself accommodate
me with dry clothes."

"While our saucy little heroine spoke, the whole
aspect of the dark-browed woman changed.
"Capitola!" she murmured, gazing
earnestly upon the face of the unwelcome guest.

"Yes! Capitola! that is my name; you never
heard anything against it, did you?"

For all answer the woman seized her hand, and
while the lightning flashed, and the thunder rolled,
and the rain fell, she drew her the whole length of the hall before a bare window
that overlooked the neglected garden, and win-
dow less of the electric fluid that incessantly blazed
upon them, she held her there and scrutinized
her features.

"Well I like this upon my word I do!"
said Cap., composedly.

Without replying the strange woman seized
her right hand, forcibly opened it, gazed into the
palm, and then flinging it back with a shudder,
exclaimed:

"Capitola, what brought you under this roof?
Away! Begone! Mount your horse and fly while
there is yet time."

"What! expose myself again to the storm? I
won't, and that's flat," said Cap.

"Girl! girl! there are worse dangers in the
world than any to be feared from thunder, light-
ning, rain or wind."

"Very well, then, when I meet them it will be
time enough to deal with them meanwhile the
stormy night and soaked clothing are very pain-
able evils, and as I see no good end to be gained
by my longer enduring them, I will just beg you
to stop, soothingly saying—as I have had enough of
that from another old wretch—and be so good as
to permit me to change my clothes."

"It is medicinal! You shall not stay here,"
cried the woman, in a harsh voice.

"And I tell you I will! You are not the head
of the family, and I do not intend to be turned
out by you."

With she spoke, a servant crossed the hall, and
the woman, whispering Capitola around until her
back was turned, and her face concealed, went to
speak to the new comer.

"When will your master be here?" Capitola
heard her inquire.

"Not to-night; he saw the storm rising and did
not wish to expose himself; he sent me on to say
that he would not be here until morning; I am
caught as you see! I am dripping wet," replied
the man.

"Go, change your clothes at once, then, Davy."
"Who is that stranger?" asked the man, point-
ing to Capitola.

"Some young woman of the neighborhood, who
has been caught out in the tempest. But you had
better go and change your clothes than to stand
here gossiping," said the woman, harshly.

"I say," said the man, "the young woman is a
God-send to Miss Clara; nobody has been to see
her yet; nobody ever visits this house unless they
are driven to it; I don't wonder the colonel and
our young master pass as much as ten months in
the year away from home, spending all the sum-
mer at the watering-places, and all the winter in
New York or Washington!"

"Hold your tongue! what right have you to
compliment! You always attend them in their travels!"
"True; but you see for this last season, they
have both been staying here, and I master to watch
the heroes, young master to court her, and as I
have no interest in that game, I find the time
hang heavy on my hands," complained the man.

"It will hang heavier if you take a long fit of
illness by standing in wet clothes," muttered
the woman.

"Why, so 'twill, missus! so here goes," as-
sented the man, hurrying across the hall and pas-
sag out through the door opposite that by which
he entered.

Dorkas returned to her guest.
"Eying her closely for a while, she at length
inquired:

"Capitola, how long have you lived at Hurri-
cane Hall?"

"What! expose myself again to the storm? I
won't, and that's flat," said Cap.

"Girl! girl! there are worse dangers in the
world than any to be feared from thunder, light-
ning, rain or wind."

"Very well, then, when I meet them it will be
time enough to deal with them meanwhile the
stormy night and soaked clothing are very pain-
able evils, and as I see no good end to be gained
by my longer enduring them, I will just beg you
to stop, soothingly saying—as I have had enough of
that from another old wretch—and be so good as
to permit me to change my clothes."

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cried the woman, in a harsh voice.

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of the family, and I do not intend to be turned
out by you."

With she spoke, a servant crossed the hall, and
the woman, whispering Capitola around until her
back was turned, and her face concealed, went to
speak to the new comer.

"When will your master be here?" Capitola
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"Not to-night; he saw the storm rising and did
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the year away from home, spending all the sum-
mer at the watering-places, and all the winter in
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the heroes, young master to court her, and as I
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the woman.

"Why, so 'twill, missus! so here goes," as-
sented the man, hurrying across the hall and pas-
sag out through the door opposite that by which
he entered.

Dorkas returned to her guest.
"Eying her closely for a while, she at length
inquired:

"Capitola, how long have you lived at Hurri-
cane Hall?"

"So long," replied Cap., "that you must have
heard of me. I, at least, have often heard of
Mother Dorky Knight!"

"And heard no good of her."

"Well, no, to be candid with you, I never did,"
said Cap.

"And much harm of her?" continued the wo-
man, keeping her stern black eyes fixed upon
those of her guest.

"Well, yes—since you ask me. I have heard
pretty considerable harm!" answered Cap., no-
thing daunted.

"Where did you live before you came to Hurri-
cane Hall?" asked Dorky.

"Where I learned to fear God, to speak the
truth, and to shame the devil!" replied Cap.—
"And to force yourself into people's houses
against their will!"

"There you are again! I tell you that when I
learn from the head of this household that I am
unwelcome, then I will retreat, and not until then!
And now I demand to be presented to the master."

"To Colonel Le Noir?"

"Yes."

"I cannot curse you with 'the curse of a grant-
ed prayer!' Colonel Le Noir is away."

"Why do you talk so strangely?" inquired
Capitola.

"It is my whim. Perhaps my head is light."

"I should think it was, exceedingly so! Well
—as the master of the house is away, be good
enough to present me to the mistress?"

"Yes."

"What mistress? there is no mistress here!" replied Dorcas, looking around in strange trepidation.

"I mean the young lady, Colonel Le Noir's ward. In lieu of any other lady, she, I suppose, may be considered the mistress of the house!"

"Humph! well, young girl, as you are fully resolved to stand your ground, I suppose there is nothing to do but to put up with you!" said Dorcas.

"And put up my horse," added Cap.

"He shall be taken care of! But mind, you must depart early in the morning," said Dorcas, sternly.

"Once more, and for the last, Mother Corbena, I assure you I do not acknowledge your authority to dismiss me," retorted Capicola, "so show me to the presence of your mistress!"

"Pursoe, like all the rest! Follow me!" said the housekeeper, leading the way from the hall towards a back parlor.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

THE INMATE OF THE HIDDEN HOUSE.

There is a light around her brow,
A boldness in those dark eyes,
That show, though wandering earthward now,
Her spirit's home is in the skies — Moore.

Pushing open the door, Dorcas Knight exclaimed:

"Here is a young lady, Miss Black, from Horne Hall, come to see you, Miss Day."

And having made this announcement, the woman retired and shut the door behind her. And Capicola found herself in a large, dark, gloomy, unfurnished room, whose tall, narrow windows allowed but little light, and whose immense fire-place and blackened furniture seemed to belong to a past century.

The only occupant of this sombre apartment was a young girl, seated in pensive thought beside the central table. She was clothed in deep mourning, which only served to throw into fairer relief the beauty of her pearly skin, golden hair, and violet eyes.

The vision of her mourning robes and melancholy beauty so deeply impressed Capicola, that, almost for the first time in her life, she hesitated, from a feeling of diffidence, and said gently:

"Indeed, I fear that this is an unwarranted intrusion on my part, Miss Day."

"You are very welcome," replied the sweetest voice Capicola had ever heard, as the young girl arose and advanced to meet her. "But you have been exposed to the storm. Please come into my room and change your clothes," continued the young hostess, as she took Cap's hand and led her into an adjoining room.

The storm was still raging; but these apartments being in the central portion of the strong old house, were but little exposed to the sight or sound of its fury.

There was a lamp burning upon the mantelpiece, by the light of which the young girl furnished her visitor with dry clothing, and assisted her to change—saying as she did so:

"I think we are about the same size, and that my clothes will fit you; but I will not offer you mourning habiliments; you shall have this lilac silk."

"I am very sorry to see you in mourning," said Capicola, earnestly.

"It is for my father," replied Clara, very softly.

As they spoke the eyes of the two young girls met. They were both good physiognomists and intuitive judges of character. Consequently, in the full meeting of their eyes, they read, understood, and appreciated each other.

The pure, grave and gentle expression of Clara's countenance, touched the heart of Capicola.

The bright, frank, honest face of Cap. recommended her to Clara.

The very opposite traits of their equally truthful characters attracted them to each other.

Clara conducted her guest back into the waiting parlor, where a cheerful fire had been kindled to correct the dampness of the air. And here they sat down unmindful of the storm that

came much subdued through the thickness of the walls. And, as young creatures, however tried and sorrowful, will do, they entered into a friendly chat. And before an hour had passed Capicola thought herself well repaid for her sufferings from the storm and the selfish in having found the acquaintance of Clara Day.

She resolved, let Old Hurricane rage as he might, henceforth she would be a frequent visitor to the Hidden House.

And Clara, for her part, felt that in Capicola she had found a frank, spirited, faithful neighbor who might become an estimable friend.

While they were thus growing into each other's favor, the door opened and admitted a gentleman of tall and thin figure, and white and emaciated face, shaded by a luxuriant growth of glossy black hair and beard. He could not have been more than twenty-six, but prematurely broken by vice, he seemed forty years of age. He advanced, bowing, towards the young woman.

As Capicola's eyes fell upon this new comer it required all her presence of mind and power of self-control to prevent her from starting or otherwise betraying herself—for in this stranger she recognized the very man who had stopped her upon her night ride! She did, however, succeed in banishing from her face every expression of consciousness. And when Miss Day courteously presented him to her guest, saying merely:

"—Capicola arose and curtsied as comely as if she had never set eyes upon his face before."

He, on his part, evidently recognized her, and sent one stealthily, keen, and scrutinizing glance into her face, but finding that importunate, he bowed with stately politeness, and seemed satisfied that she had not identified him as her assailant.

Clara Le Noir drew his chair to the fire, seated himself, and entered into an easy conversation with Clara and her guest. Whenever he addressed Clara there was a deference and tenderness in his tone and glance that seemed very displeasing to the fair girl, who received all these delicate attentions with coldness and reserve. These things did not escape the notice of Capicola, who mentally concluded that Craven Le Noir was a lover of Clara Day, but a most unacceptable one.

When supper was announced, it was evidently hailed by Clara as a great relief. And after the meal was over, she arose and excused herself to her cousin, by saying that her guest, Miss Black, had been exposed to the storm, and was doubtless very much fatigued and that she would show her to her chamber.

Then taking a night lamp she invited Capicola to come, and conducted her to an old-fashioned upper chamber, where a cheerful fire was burning on the hearth. Here the young girls sat down before the fire and improved their acquaintance by an hour's conversation. After which Clara arose, and saying:

"I sleep immediately below your room, Miss Black. If you should want anything, rap on the floor, and I shall hear you and get up."

She wished her guest a good night's rest, and retired from the room.

Cap. was disinclined to sleep; a strange, superstitious feeling which she could neither understand nor throw off, had fallen upon her spirits.

She took the night-lamp in her hand and went up to examine her chamber. It was a large, dark oak-paneled room, with a dark carpet on the floor, and dark green curtains on the windows and the bedstead. Over the mantelpiece hung the portrait of a most beautiful black-haired and black-eyed girl of about fourteen years of age, but upon whose infantile brow fell the shadow of some fearful woe. There was something awful in the despair "on that face, so young," that bound the gaze in an irresistible and most painful spell. And Capicola remained standing before it transfixed, until the striking of the ball clock aroused her from her enchantment.

Wondering who that fearful woe that darkened like a curse her angel-brow, Capicola turned almost sorrowfully away, and began to prepare for bed.

Clara had provided for her use, said her evening prayers—looked under the bed—a process she had taken over since that night upon which she had discovered the burglars—and finding all right, she blew

out her candle and lay down. She could not sleep—many persons do so on the first night in a strange room. Cap. was very mercenary, and the bed and room in which she lay were very strange; for the first time since she had had a home to call her own, she was unexpectedly staying all night away from her friends, and without their having any knowledge of her whereabouts; she was, consequently, half in fear and half in awe. Old Hurricane was taking her escape, and what he would say to her in the morning! She was wondering to find herself in such an unforsaken position as Home—wondering whether this were the guest-chamber in which the ghost appeared to the officer, and these were the very curtains that the pale lady drew at night. While her thoughts were thus running over the whole range of circumstances around her singular position, sleep overtook Capicola, and speculation was lost in brighter visions.

How long she had slept and dreamed she did not know, when something gently awakened her. She opened her eyes calmly to meet a vision that, brave as she was, nearly froze the blood in her war veins!

Her chamber was illumined with an intense blue flame that lighted up every portion of the apartment with a strange bright as day; and in the midst of this effulgence moved a figure clothed in white—a beautiful, pale, and young woman, whose large, motionless black eyes, deep-set in her deathlike face, and whose long, unbroken black hair, fallen upon her white raiment, were the only marks of color about her marble form.

Paralyzed with wonder, Capicola watched this figure as it glided across the chamber. The apparition approached the dressing-table, seemed to take something thence, and then glided towards the bed—to Capicola's inexpressible horror—drew back the curtains and bent down and gazed upon her! Capicola had no power to scream, to move, or to avert her gaze from those awful eyes that met her own, until her length, as the spectral hand lips lower, she felt the pressure of a pair of icy fingers upon her brow, and closed her eyes.

When she opened them again the vision had departed and the room was dark and quiet.

There was no more sleep for Capicola. She heard the clock strike four, and was pleased to find that it was so near day. Still the time seemed very long to her who lay there wondering, conjecturing and speculating on the strange adventure of the night.

When the sun arose, she left her restless bed, bathed her excited head, and proceeded to dress herself. When she had finished her toilet, with the exception of putting on her trinkets, she suddenly missed a ring that she prized more than she did all her possessions put together—it was a plain gold band, bearing on the inner side the inscription—*Capicola—Eugene*—and which she had been enjoined by her old nurse never to part from but with life. She had, in her days of destitution, suffered the extreme of cold and hunger—had been upon the very brink of death from starvation or freezing, but without ever dreaming of sacrificing her ring. And now for the first time it was missing. While she was still looking anxiously for the lost jewel the door opened, and Dorcas Knight entered the room, bearing on her arm Capicola's riding dress, which had been well dried and ironed.

"Miss Capicola, here is your habit; you had better put it on at once, as I have ordered breakfast an hour sooner than usual, so that you may have an early start."

"Upon my word, you are very anxious to get rid of me, but not more so than I am to depart!" said Capicola, still pursuing her search.

"Your friends are so anxious to know where you are, must be very uneasy about you. But what are you looking for?"

"A ring—a plain gold circle with my name and that of another inscribed on it, and which I would not lose for the world. I hung it on a pin, on this pin cushion, last night before I went to bed—I would swear I did! and now it is missing," answered Cap. still pursuing her search.

"If you lost it in this room, it will be certainly be found," said Dorcas Knight, putting down the habit and helping in the search.

"I am not so sure of that. There was some one in my room last night."

down. She could not sleep nervous, or mercurial tomorrow the first night in a strange room, and the bed was very strange; for the old had a home to call her and still staying all night away without their having any suspicion; she was conjectured in fact, how Old Hurricane, and what he would do! She was wondering an unbecoming position as in the mysterious hidden ghost that this was the guest-guest appeared to the officer very curious that the officer was the whole range of circumstances, position, speculation was lost in

pt and dreamed she did not gently awakened her. It was not a vision, nearly from the blood of an intense vision every portion of the day bright as day; and in the morning a figure clothed in black, deeply of circumstance, whose long, unbound white raiment, were about her marble form. Capitola watched this chamber. The appearance, seemed to her then grew to a terrible horror—drew down and gazed upon her to scream, to move, those awful eyes that, as the spectral head crossed her eyes, she again the vision had dark and quiet. She was pleased to see the time of the strange advent.

left her restless bed, and proceeded to dress washed her toilet, with her trinkets, she surprised more than she could tell—it was the inner side of the door—and which she had nurse never to part with, in her days of distress of cold and hunger drink of death from without ever dreaming of now for the first she was still looking the door opened, and poor, bearing on her which had been well

our habit; you had have come to breakfast, so that you may very anxious to get man I am to depart!" her search.

know where you are, you. But what are with my name and, and which I would long I went on a pin, on before I went to bed now it is missing," she said, in search. "It will certainly be putting down the There was some

"Some one in your room!" exclaimed Dorcas in dismay.

"Yes, a dark haired woman, all dressed in white."

Dorcas Knight gave two or three angry grunts, and then harshly exclaimed:

"Nonsense! Woman, indeed! There is no such woman about the house! There are no female-here except Miss Day, myself, and you—not even a waiting-maid or cook."

"Well," said Cap., "if it was not a woman, it was a ghost, for I was wide awake and I saw it with my own eyes."

"Fudge: you've heard that foolish story of the haunted room, and you have dreamed the whole thing."

"I tell you I didn't. I saw it. Don't know?"

"I say you dreamed it! There is no such living woman here; and, for a ghost, that is all folly! And I must beg, Miss Black, that you will not distress Miss Day by telling her this strange dream of yours. She has never heard the ridiculous story of the haunted room, and as she lies here in solitude, I would not like her to hear of it."

"Oh, I will say nothing to disgust Miss Day. But it was no dream. It was real, if there is any reality in this world."

There was no more said. They continued to look for the ring, but in vain. Dorcas Knight, however, assured her guest that it should be found and returned, and that—breakfast waited. Whereupon Capitola went down to the parlor, where she found Clara awaiting her presence to give her a kindly greeting.

"Mr. Le Noir never gets up until very late, and so we do not wait for him," said Dorcas Knight, as she took her seat at the head of the table, and signed to the young girls to gather around it.

After breakfast, Capitola, promising to come again soon, and inviting Clara to return her visit took leave of her entertainers and set out for home.

"Thank heaven I have got her off in time and safety!" muttered Dorcas Knight, in triumph.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

CAP.'S RETURN.

Must I give way and room for your rash ebullience? Shall I be frightened when a madman stares? Do show your slaves how ebullient you are! And make your bondsmen tremble! I'll not baffle them.—SHAKESPEARE.

It happened that about sunrise that morning, Wool broke in the cellar, and remembered that upon the night previous his master had commanded him to sail forth in the storm and seek his young mistress, and had forbidden him, on pain of broken bones, to return without bringing her safe. Therefore, what did the honest soul do but steal out to the stables, saddle and mount a horse, and ride back to the house just as Mrs. Condit had come out into the poultry-yard to get eggs for breakfast.

"Missus Compliment, ma'am, Ise been out all night in search of Miss Caterpillar, without finding of her. Is she come back, ma'am?"

"Lor I no, indeed, Wool. I'm very anxious, and the Major is taking on dreadful. But I hope she is safe in some home. But, poor Wool, you must have had a dreadful time out all night in the storm, looking for her."

"Awful, Missus Compliment, ma'am, awful!" said Wool.

"Indeed I know you had, my poor creature. Come in and get some warm breakfast," said the kind old lady.

"I daron't, Missus Compliment. Old marse forbid me to show my face to him until I fetch Miss Caterpillar home safe," said Wool, turning his horse's head as if to go. In doing so, he saw Capitola's halloping towards the house, and with an exclamation of joy, pointed her out to the old lady, and rode on to meet her.

"Oh, Miss Caterpillar, Ise so glad I've found you. Ise done been out looking for you all night long!" exclaimed Wool, as he met her.

Capitola pulled up her horse, and surveyed the speaker with a comical expression, saying:

"Been out all night looking for me!" Well, I must say you seem in a fine state of preser-

vation for a man who has been exposed to the storm all night. You have not a wet thread on you!"

"Lor, Miss, it rained till one o'clock, and then the wind rised and blowed till six, and blowed me dry!" said Wool, as he sprang off his horse, and helped his young mistress to alight.

Then, instead of taking the beasts to the stable, he tied them to a tree, and hurried into the house, and up stairs to his master's room, to apprise him of the return of the lost sheep, Capitola.

Old Hurricane was lying awake, tossing, groaning, and grumbling with anxiety.

On seeing Wool enter, he deliberately raised up and seized a heavy iron candlestick, and held it ready to hurl at the head of that worthy, whom he thus addressed:

"Ah, you have come, you atrocious villain. You know the conditions? If you have dared to show your face witho—bringing your young mistress—"

"Pleaze, marse, I war out looking for her all night."

"Have you brought her!" thundered Old Hurricane, rising up.

"Pleaze, marse, yes, sir. I done found her and brought her home safe."

"Send her up to me," said Old Hurricane, sinking back with a sigh of infinite relief.

Wool flew to do his bidding.

In five minutes Capitola entered her uncle's chamber.

Now Old Hurricane had spent a night of almost intolerable anxiety upon his favorite's account, bewailing her danger and praying for her safety; but no sooner did he see her enter his chamber safe and sound, and smiling, than indignation quick mastered him, and jumping out of the bed in his nightgown, he made a dash straight at Capitola.

Now, had Capitola run, there is little doubt but that, in the blindness of his fury, he would have caught and beat her then and there. But Cap. saw him coming, drew up her tiny form, folded her arms, and looked him directly in the face.

This stopped him, but like a mettlesome old horse, suddenly pulled up in full career, he stamped, and reared, and plunged with fury, and foamed, and spluttered, and sluttered before he could get words out.

"What do you mean, you vixen, by standing there and popping your great gray eyes out at me? Are you going to bite, you tigress? What do you mean by facing me at all?" he roared, shaking his fist within an inch of Capitola's little pug nose.

"I am here, because you sent for me, sir," was Cap.'s unanswerable rejoinder.

"Here because I sent for you! humph! humph! humph! and come dancing and smiling into my room, as if you had not kept me awake all the live-long night—yes! driven me within one inch of a brain fever! Not that I cared for you, you limb of old Nick! not that I cared for you, except to wish with all my heart and soul that something or other had happened to you, you vixen! Where did you spend the night, you laziness?"

"At the old Hidden House, where I went to make a call on my new neighbor, Miss Day, and where I was caught in the storm."

"I wish to heaven you had been caught in a man-trap and had all your limbs broken, you—you—!" ejaculated Old Hurricane, turning short, and trotting up and down the room. Presently he stopped before Capitola, and rapping his cane down upon the floor, demanded:

"Who did you see at that accursed place, you—you—ou infatuated maniac?"

"Miss Day. Mr. Le Noir, Mrs. Knight, and a man-servant—name unknown," coolly replied Cap.

"And the head demon, where was he?"

"Uncle, if by the head demon you mean Old Nick, I think it quite likely, from present appearances, that he passed the night at Hurricane Hall."

"I mean—Colonel Le Noir!" exclaimed Old Hurricane, as if the name choked him.

"Oh! I understood that he had that day left home."

"Umph! Oh! Ah! that accounts for it! that accounts for it," muttered Old Hurricane to him-

self—then, seeing that Capitola was wistfully regarding his face, and attending to his muttered phrases, he broke out upon her with:

"Get out of this—this—" he meant to say—"get out of this house," but a sure instinct warned him that if he should speak thus, Capitola, unlike the other members of his household, would take him at his word.

"Get out of this room, you vagabond!" he vociferated.

And Cap., with a curtsy and a kiss of her hand, danced away.

Old Hurricane stamped up and down the floor, gesticulating like a demoniac, and vociferating:

"She'll get herself burked, kidnapped, murdered, or what not! I'm sure she will! I know it! I feel it! It's no use to order her not to go; she would be sure to disobey! and go ten times as often! what the demon shall I do—Wool! Wool! for the very reason that she was forbidden what the demon shall I do—Wool! Wool! Wool, you brimstone villain, come here!" he roared, going to the bell-rope and pulling it until he broke it down.

Wool ran in with his hair bristling, his teeth chattering, and his eyes starting.

"Come here to me, you varlet! Now listen: You are to keep a sharp look-out after your young mistress. Whenever she rides abroad, you are to mount a horse and ride after her, and keep your eyes open, for if you only once lose sight of her, you knave, do you know what I shall do to you, eh?"

"N—no, marse," stammered Wool, pale with apprehension.

"I'll punish you for eyelids off to improve your vision! Look to it, sir, for I shall keep my word. And now come and help me to dress," concluded old Hurricane.

Wool, with chattering teeth, shaking knees, and trembling fingers, assisted his master in his morning toilet, meditating the while whether it were not better to avoid impending dangers by running away.

And, in fact, between his master and his mistress, Wool had a hot time of it. The weather, after the storm had cleared the atmosphere, was delightful, and Cap. rode out that very day. Poor Wool kept his eyeballs metaphorically "skinned," for fear they should be treated literally so—held his eyes wide open, lest Old Hurricane should keep his word, and make it impossible for him ever to shut them.

When Cap. stole out, mounted her horse and rode away, in five minutes from the moment of starting she heard a horse's hoofs behind her, and presently saw Wool gallop to her side.

At first Cap. bore this good-lumored enough, only saying:

"Go home, Wool. I don't want you. I had much rather ride alone."

To which the groom replied:

"It is old Marse's orders, Miss, as I should wait on you."

Capitola's spirit rebelled against this; and suddenly turning upon her attendant, she indignantly exclaimed:

"Wool, I don't want you, sir! I insist upon being left alone! and I order you to go home, sir!"

Upon this Wool burst into tears and roared.

Much surprised, Capitola inquired of him what the matter was.

For some time, Wool could only reply by sobbing, but when he was able to articulate he blubbered forth:

"It's nuf to make anybody go put his head undernef of a meat-ax, so it is!"

"What is the matter, Wool?" again inquired Capitola.

"How'd you like to have your eyelids cut off?" howled Wool, indignantly.

"What?" inquired Capitola.

"Yes, I axes how'd you like to have your eyelids cut off?"—Case that's what old marse treatens to do long of me, if I don't follow arter you and keep you in sight!—And now you forbids me to do it, and—and—and—I'll go and put my neck right undernef of a meat-ax!"

Now Capitola was really kind-hearted, and well knowing the despotic temper of her guardian, she pitied Wool, and after a little hesitation, she said:

"Wool, so your old master says if you don't keep your eyes on me, he'll cut your eyelids off!"

"Ye—ye—yes, Miss," sobbed Wool.

"Did he say if you don't listen to me he'd cut your ears off?"

"N—n—no, Miss."

"Did he swear if you didn't talk to me he'd cut your tongue out?"

"N—n—no, Miss."

"Well, now, stop howling, and listen to me. Since at the peril of your eyelids you are obliged to keep me in sight, I give you leave to ride just within view of me; but no nearer, and you are never to let me see or hear you, if you can help it, for I like to be alone."

"I'll do anything in this world for peace, Miss Caterpillar," said poor Wool.

And upon this basis the affair was finally settled. And no doubt Capitola owed much of her personal safety to the fact that Wool kept his eyes open!

While these scenes were going on at Hurricane Hall, momentous events were taking place elsewhere, which require another chapter for their development.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

ANOTHER MYSTERY AT THE HIDDEN HOUSE.

"Hark! what a shriek was that of fear intense,
Of horror and amazement,
What fearful struggle to the door, and thence,
With many doubles, to the casement!"

An hour after the departure of Capitola, Colonel Le Noir returned to the Hidden House, and learned, from his man David, that upon the preceding evening a young girl, of whose name he was ignorant, had sought shelter from the storm and passed the night at the mansion.

Now Colonel Le Noir was extremely jealous of receiving strangers under his roof—never during his short stay at the Hidden House, going out into company, lest he should be obliged in return to entertain visitors. And when he learned that a strange girl had spent the night beneath his roof, he frowningly directed that Dorcas should be sent to him.

When his morose manager made her appearance, he harshly demanded the name of the young woman whom she had dared to receive beneath his roof.

Now, whether there is any truth in the theory of magnetism or not, it is certain that Dorcas Knight, stern, harsh, resolute woman that she was toward all others, became as submissive as a child, in the presence of Colonel Le Noir.

At his command she gave him all the information he required, not even withholding the fact of Capitola's strange story of having seen the apparition of the pale-faced lady in her chamber, together with the subsequent discovery of the loss of her ring.

Colonel Le Noir sternly reprimanded his domestic manager for her neglect of his orders, and dismissed her from his presence.

The remainder of the day was passed by him in moody thought. That evening he summoned his son to a private conference in the parlor—an event that happily delivered poor Clara Day from their presence at her bedside.

That night Clara, dreading lest at the end of their interview they might return to her society, retired early to her chamber, where she sat reading until a late hour, when she went to bed and found transient forgetfulness of trouble in sleep. She did not know how long she had slept when she was suddenly and terribly awakened by a woman's shriek sounding from the room immediately overhead, in which, upon the night previous, Capitola had slept.

Starting up in bed, Clara listened. The shriek was repeated—prolonged and piercing, and was accompanied by a muffled sound of struggling that shook the ceiling overhead.

Instinctively springing from her bed, Clara threw on her dressing gown and flew to the door, but just as she turned the latch to open it, she heard a bolt slipped on the outside and found herself a prisoner in her own chamber.

Appalled, she stood and listened.

Presently there came a sound of footsteps on the stairs and a heavy muffled noise as of some dead weight being dragged down the staircase, and along the passage. Then she heard the hall door cautiously opened and shut. And finally she distinguished the sound of wheels rolling away from the house.

Unable longer to restrain herself, she rapped and beat upon her own door, crying aloud for deliverance.

Presently the bolt was withdrawn, the door jerked open, and Dorcas Knight, with a face of horror stood before her.

"What is the matter? Who was that screaming?" In the name of mercy what has happened?" cried Clara, shrinking in abhorrence from the ghastly woman.

"Hush! it is nothing! there was two tom-cats screaming and fighting in the attic, and they fought all the way down stairs, rolling over and over each other. I've just turned them out," faltered the woman, shivering as with ague fit.

"What—what was that—that went away in the carriage?" asked Clara, shuddering.

"The Colonel, gone to meet the early stage at Tip Top, to take him to Washington. He would have taken leave of you last night, but when he came to your parlor you had left it."

"But—but—there it blood upon your hand, Dorcas Knight!" cried Clara, shaking with horror.

"I—I know—The cats scratched me as I put them out," stammered the stern woman, trembling almost as much as Clara herself.

These answers failed to satisfy the young girl, who shrank in terror and loathing from that woman's presence, and sought the privacy of her own chamber, murmuring:

"What has happened? What has been done, oh, heaven! Oh, heaven, what has been done, some dreadful deed has been done in this house, to-night!"

There was no more sleep for Clara. She heard the clock strike every hour from one to six in the morning, when she arose and dressed herself and went from her room, expecting to see upon the floor and walls, and upon the faces of the household, signs of some dreadful tragedy enacted upon the previous night.

But all things were as usual—the same dark, gloomy and neglected magnificence about the rooms and passages, the same reserved, sullen and silent aspect about the persons.

Dorcas Knight presided as usual at the head of the breakfast table, and Craven Le Noir at the foot. Clara sat in her accustomed seat at the side, midway between them.

Clara shuddered in taking her cup of coffee from the hand of Dorcas, and declined the wing upon her plate.

Not a word was said upon the subject of the mystery of the preceding night, until Craven Le Noir, without venturing to meet the eyes of the young girl, said:

"You look very pale, Clara!"

"Miss Day was frightened by the cats last night," said Dorcas.

Clara answered never a word. The ridiculous story assayed to be palmed off upon her credulity in explanation of the night's mystery, had not gained an instant's belief.

She knew that the cry that had startled her from sleep, had burst in strong agony from human lips.

That the helpless weight she had heard dragged down the stairs and along the whole length of the passage, was some dead or insensible human form.

That the blood she had seen upon the hand of Dorcas Knight, was—oh, heaven, her mind shrank back appalled with horror, at the thought which she dared not entertain! She could only shudder, pray, and trust in God.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

CAP FREES THE CAPTIVE.

Hold daughter! I do spy a kind of hope,
Which craveth as desperate an execution
As that is desperate, which we would prevent.
And if thou dar'st, I'll give thee remedy!
Hail, then! go hence, be merry, give content
To merry Paris! Wednesday is to marry!
—SHAKESPEARE.

As the autumn weather was now very pleasant, Capitola continued her rides, and without standing upon ceremony, repeated her visit to the Hidden House. She was as usual followed by

Wool, who kept at a respectful distance, and who during his mistress's visit remained outside in attendance upon the horses.

Capitola luckily was in no danger of encountering Colonel Le Noir, who since the night of the mysterious tragedy had not returned home; but had gone to and settled in his winter quarters at Washington City.

But she again met Craven Le Noir, who contrary to his usual custom of accompanying his father upon his annual migrations to the metropolis, had upon this occasion remained home in close attendance upon his cousin, the wealthy orphan.

Capitola found Clara the same sweet, gentle and patient girl, with this difference only—that her youthful brow was now overshadowed by a heavy trouble which could not wholly be explained by her state of orphanage, or her sorrow for the dead—it was too full of anxiety, gloom and terror, to have reference to the past alone.

Capitola saw all this, and trusting in her own powers, would have sought the confidence of the poor girl, with the view of soothing her sorrows and helping her out of her difficulties; but Miss Day, candid upon all other topics was strangely reserved upon this subject, and Capitola, with all her eccentricity, was too delicate to seek to intrude upon the young mourner's sanctuary of grief.

But a crisis was fast approaching which rendered further concealment difficult and dangerous, and which threw Clara for protection upon the courage, presence of mind and address of Capitola.

Since Clara Day had parted with her betrothed and taken up her residence beneath the guardian's roof, she had regularly written both to Traverser at St. Louis, and to his mother at Staunton. But she had received no reply from either mother or son. And months had passed filling the mind of Clara with anxiety upon their account.

She did not for one moment doubt their constancy, alas! it required but little perspicacity on her part to perceive that the letters on either side must have been intercepted by the Le Noirs—father and son!

Her greatest anxiety was lest Mrs. Rocke and Traverser, failing to hear from her, should imagine that she had forgotten them. She longed to assure them that she had not! But how could she do this?—It was perfectly useless to write and send the letter to the post-office, for any servant at the Hidden House, for such a letter so sent would be sure to find its way—not into the mail bags, but—into the pocket of Colonel Le Noir.

Finally, Clara resolved to entrust honest Cap. with no matter of her story as would engage her interest and co-operation, and then confide to her care the letter to be placed in the post-office. Clara had scarcely come to this resolution, ere, as we have said, an imminent crisis obliged her to seek the further aid of Capitola.

Craven Le Noir had never shated his unacceptable attentions to the orphan heiress. Day by day, on the contrary, to Clara's unspeakable distress, these attentions grew more pointed and alarming.

At first she had received them coldly and repulsed them gently; but as they grew more ardent and devoted she became colder and more reserved, until at length by maintaining a freezing hauteur, she evinced with her usually sweet temper, she sought to repel the declaration that was ever ready to fall from his lips.

But notwithstanding her evident abhorrence of his suit, Craven Le Noir persisted in his purpose.

And so, one morning, he entered the parlor and finding Clara alone, he closed the door, seated himself beside her, took her hand and made a formal declaration of love and proposal of marriage, urging his suit with all the eloquence of which he was master.

Now Clara Day, a Christian maiden a recently bereaved orphan, and an affianced bride, had too profound a regard for her duties toward God, her father's will, and her betrothed husband's rights, to treat this attempted invasion of her faith in any other than the most deliberate, serious and dignified manner.

"I am very sorry, Mr. Le Noir, that it has at length come to this. I thought I had conducted myself in such a manner as totally to discourage any such purpose as this which you have just

respectful distance, and
his visit remained out-
on the horses.
in no danger of encounter-
since the night of the
not returned home; but
in his winter quarters at

Craven Le Noir, who con-
tem of accompanying his
migrations to the me-
occasion remained home
in his cousin, the wealthy

the same sweet, gentle
this difference only—that
now overshadowed by a
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rted with her betrothed
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written both to Tra-
his mother at Staunton.
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and passed filling the
upon their account.
doubt their com-
ent left perspicuity on
the letters on either side
told to the Le Noirs

lest Mrs. Roche and
om her, should imagine
She longed to as-
! But how could she
! Unless to write and
office by any servant
such a letter to sent
—not into the mail
of Colonel Le Noir,
to entrust honest Cap-
as would engage her
and then confide to
in the post-office,
this resolution ever, as
crisis obliged her to
do.

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entered the parlor and
died the door, seated
her hand she made a
and proposal of mar-
all the sequence of

the maiden a recently
anced bride, had too
as toward in God, her
wed husband's rights,
sion of her faith in
liberal, serious and

Not, that it has at
right I had conducted
totally to discourage
which you have just

honoured me by disclosing. Now, however, that
the subject may be set at rest forever, I feel
bound to announce to you that my hand is already
plighted," said Clara, gravely.

"But my fairest and dearest love, your little
hand cannot be plighted without the consent of
your guardian, who would never countenance the
imprudent step to which I understand that I am
made by the low young man to whom, I pre-
sume, you allude. That engagement was a very
foolish affair, my dear girl, and only to be
palliated upon the ground of your extreme child-
ishness at the time of its being made. You must
forget the whole matter, my sweetest love, and
prepare yourself to listen to a suit more worthy of
your social position," said Craven Le Noir, at-
tempting to steal his arm around her waist.

Clara coldly repelled him, saying:
"I am at a loss to understand, Mr. Le Noir,
what set of levity on my part has given you the
assurance to offer me this affront!"

"Do you call it an affront, fair cousin, that I
lay my hand and heart, and fortune, at your
feet?"

"I have called your act, sir, by its gentlest
name. Under the circumstances, I might well
have called it an outrage!"

"And what may be those circumstances that
convert an act of adoration—into an outrage,
my sweet cousin?"

"Sir, you know them well! I have not con-
sented from yourself or my guardian that I am
the affianced bride of Doctor Roche, nor that I
doth was plighted with the full consent of
dear father," said Clara, gravely.

"Tut, tut, but my charming cousin, the
more shall I play—a school girl's romantic waltz;
do not dream that your guardian will ever permit
you to throw yourself away upon that low-bred
fellow!"

"Mr. Le Noir, if you permit yourself to ad-
dress me in this manner, I shall feel compelled to
retire. I cannot remain here to have my honored
father's will and memory, and the rights of my
betrothed, insulted in my person!" said Clara,
rising to leave the room.

"No—stay! forgive me, Clara! pardon me,
gentlest girl, if, in my great love for you, I grow
impatient of any other claim upon your heart,
especially from such an unworthy quarter!"
Clara, you are a mere child, full of generous, but
romantic sentiments, and dangerous impulses!
You require extra vigilance and firm exercise of
authority on the part of your guardians to save
you from certain self-destruction! And some
day, sweet girl, you will thank us for preserving
you from the horrors of such a mésalliance," said
Craven Le Noir, gently detaining her.

"I tell you, Mr. Le Noir, that your manner of
speaking of my betrothal is equally insulting to
myself, Doctor Roche, and my dear father, who
never would have plighted our hands had he con-
sidered our prospective marriage a mésalliance."
"Nor do I suppose he ever did plight our
hands—while in his right senses?"

"Oh, sir! this has been discussed before! I
beg of you to let the subject drop for ever, re-
membering that I hold myself sacredly betrothed
to Traverse Roche, and ready—when at my legal
majority, he shall claim me—to redeem my
plighted faith by becoming his wife."

"Clara! this is madness! it must not be en-
dured, nor shall it! I have hitherto sought to
win your heart by showing you the great extent of
my love, but be careful how you scorn that
love, or continue to tempt me with the mention
of an unworthy rival! For though I use gentle
means, should I find them fail of their purpose, I
shall know how to avail myself of harsher ones."

Clara disclaimed reply, except by permitting her
clear eyes to pass over him from head to foot with
an expression of consuming scorn that scathed
him to the quick.

"I tell you to be careful, Clara Day! I come
to you armed with the authority of your legal
guardian, my father, Colonel Le Noir, who will
forestall your foolish purpose of throwing your-
self and your fortune away upon a beggar, even
though to do so, he strain his authority and co-
erce you into taking a more suitable companion."

Clara, Le Noir, rising impatiently, and
pacing the floor. But no sooner had he spoken
those words than he saw how greatly he had
injured his cause, and repented them. Going
to Clara and intercepting her as she was about to

leave the room, he gently took her hand, and
dropping his eyes to the floor, with a look of
humility and penitence, he said:

"Clara, my sweet cousin, I know not how
sufficiently to express my sorrow at having been
hurried into harshness towards you:—towards you,
whom I love more than my own soul, and whom
it is the fondest wish of my heart to call—wife!
I only excuse myself for this, or any future
extravagance of manner, by my excessive love for
you, and the jealousy that maddens my brain at
the bare mention of my rival. That is it, sweet
girl! Can you forgive one whom love and jealousy
has hurried into frenzy?"

"Mr. Le Noir, the Bible enjoins me to forgive
injuries. I shall endeavor, when I can, to for-
give you; though for the present, my heart is still
burning under the sense of wrongs done towards
myself and those whom I love and esteem, and
the only way in which you can make me forget
what has just passed, will be—never to repeat the
offense." And with these words, Clara bent her
head and passed from the room.

Could she have seen the malignant scowl and
gesture with which Craven Le Noir followed her
departure, she would scarcely have trusted his
expressions of penitence.

Lifting his arm above his head, he fiercely
shook his fist after her, and exclaimed:

"Go on, insolent girl, and imagine that you
have humbled me! But the tunc shall be changed
by the day month! for before that time, what-
ever power the law gives the husband over his
wife and her property, shall be mine over you and
your possessions! Then we shall see who shall
be insolent! Then we shall see whose proud
blue eyes shall day after day dare to look up and
rebuke me! Oh! to get you into my power, my
girl, not that I love you, moon-faced creature! but
I want your position! which is quite as
strong an incentive."

Then he left into thought. He had an ugly
way of scowling and biting his nails when deeply
brooding over any subject, and now he walked
slowly up and down the floor with his head upon
his breast, his brows drawn over his nose, and
his four fingers between his teeth, gnawing away
like a wild beast, while he muttered:

"She is not like the other one! she has more
sense and strength! she will give us more trouble.
We must continue to try fair means a little longer!
It will be difficult, for I am not accustomed to
control my passions even for a purpose! yet—
penitence and love are the only cards to be played
to this insolent girl for the present. After-
wards—!"

Here his soliloquy muttered itself into silence,
his head sunk deeper upon his breast, his brows
gathered lower over his nose, and he walked and
gnawed his nails like a hungry wolf.

The immediate result of his cogitation was that
he went into the library and wrote off a letter to
his father, telling him all that had transpired be-
tween himself and Clara, and asking his further
counsel.

He dispatched this letter, and waited an an-
swer.

During the week that ensued before he could
hear from his father, Craven Le Noir, he treated
Clara with marked deference and respect.

And Clara on her part did not tax his forbear-
ance by appearing in his presence oftener than
she could possibly avoid.

At the end of the week the expected letter
came. It was short and to the purpose. It ran
thus:

WASHINGTON, Dec 14, 18—
MY DEAR CRAVEN:—You are losing time. Do
not hope to win the girl by the means you pro-
pose. She is too acute to be deceived, and too
firm to be persuaded. We must not hesitate to
use the only possible means by which we can
coerce her into compliance. I shall follow this
letter by the first stage-coach, and, before the
beginning of the next month, Clara Day shall be
your wife.

Your affectionate father, GABRIEL LE NOIR.
C. Le Noir, Esq., Hidden House.

When Craven Le Noir read this letter, his thin
white face, and deep-set eyes lighted up with
triumph. But Craven Le Noir buzzed before he
was out of the woods. He had not calculated
upon Capitola.

The next day Colonel Le Noir came to the

Hidden House. He arrived late in the after-
noon.

After refreshing himself with a bath, a change
of clothing, and a light luncheon, he went to the
library where he resumed the remainder of the
evening in a confidential conference with his
son. Their supper was ordered to be served up
to them there. And for that one evening Clara
had the comfort of taking her tea alone.

The result of this conference was that the
next morning, after breakfast, Colonel Le Noir
sent for Miss Day to come to him in the library.

When Clara, nervous her gentle heart to re-
sist a sinful tyranny, entered the library, Col-
onel Le Noir arose and courteously handed her
to a chair; and then, seating himself beside her,
said:

"My dear Clara, the responsibilities of a guard-
ian are always very onerous, and his duties not
always very agreeable, especially when his ward
is the sole heiress of a large property, and the
object of pursuit by fortune-hunters and man-
euverers, male and female. When such is the
case, the duties and responsibilities of the guard-
ian are augmented a hundred-fold."

"Sir, this cannot be so in my case; since you
are perfectly aware that my destiny is—humanly
speaking—already decided," replied Clara, with
gentle firmness.

"As how, I pray you, my fair ward?"
"You cannot possibly be at a loss to under-
stand, sir. You have been already advised that
I am betrothed to Dr. Roche, who will claim me
as his wife, upon the day that I shall complete
my twenty-first year."

"Miss Clara Day, no more of that, I beseech
you. It is folly, perversity, frenzy! But, it
is to the wisdom of legislators, the law very
properly invests the guardian with great latitude
of discretionary power over the person and prop-
erty of his ward—to be used, of course, for that
ward's best interest. And thus, my dear Clara,
it is my duty, while holding this power over you,
to exercise it for preventing the possibility of your
ever, either now or at any future time,
throwing yourself away upon a mere adventurer.
To do this, I must provide you with a suitable
husband. My son, Mr. Craven Le Noir, has long
loved and wooed you. He is a young man of
good reputation and fair prospects. I fully
approve his suit; and as your guardian, I com-
mand you to receive him for your destined hus-
band."

"Colonel Le Noir, this is no time for bated
breath and whispered humbleness. I am but a
simple girl of seventeen, but I understand your
purpose and that of your son just as well as
though I were an old man of the world! You
are the fortune-hunters and maneuverers! It
is the fortune of the wealthy heiress and friend-
less orphan that you are in pursuit of! But
that fortune, like my hand and heart, is already
promised to one I love; and to speak very plainly
to you, I would die ere I would disappoint him,
or wed your son!" said Clara, with invincible
firmness.

"Dis, girl?—there are worse things than death
in the world!" said Colonel Le Noir, with a
threatening glare.

"I know it! and one of the worst things in
the world would be a union with a man I could
neither esteem, nor even endure!" exclaimed
Clara.

Colonel Le Noir saw that there was no use in
further disguise. Throwing off, then, the last
restraints of good breeding, he said:

"And there are still more terrible evils for a
woman than to be the wife of one she can neither
esteem nor endure!"

Clara shook her head in proud scorn.
"There are evils, to encase which, such a
woman would go down upon her bended knees to
be made the wife of such a man!"

Clara's gentle eyes flashed with indignation.
"Inimious!" she cried. "You slander all
womanhood in my person!"

"The evils to which I allude are—comprised
in—a life of dishonor!" hissed Le Noir, through
his set teeth.

"This to my father's daughter?" exclaimed
Clara, growing white as death at the insult.

"Aye, my girl! it is time we understood each
other! You are in my power, and I intend to
coerce you to my will!"
These words, accompanied as they were by a

look that left no doubt upon her mind that he would carry out his purpose to any extremity, so appalled the maiden's soul that she stood like one suddenly struck with catatony.

The unscrupulous wretch then approached her and said:

"I am going now to the county seat to take out a marriage license for you and my son. I shall have the carriage at the door by six o'clock this evening, when I desire that you will be ready to accompany us to church, where a clerical friend will be in attendance to perform the marriage ceremony!—Clara Day, if you would save your honor, look to this!"

All this time, Clara had neither moved, nor spoken, nor breathed. She had stood cold, white, and still, as if turned to stone.

"Let no vain hope of escape delude your mind. The doors will be kept locked; the servants are all warned not to suffer you to leave the house. Look to it, Clara, for the rising of another sun shall see my purpose accomplished!"

And with these words the atrocious wretch left the room. His departure took of the dreadful spell that had paralyzed Clara's life; her blood began to circulate again; breath came to her lungs, and speech to her lips.

"Oh, Lord," she cried, "Oh, Lord, who delivered the children from the fiery furnace, deliver thy poor handmaiden now from her terrible foes!"

While thus she prayed, she saw upon the writing-table before her a small pen knife. Her cheeks flushed and her eyes brightened as she seized it.

"This! this!" she said, "this small instrument, is sufficient to save me! Should the worst ensue—I know where to find the carotid artery, and even such a slight puncture as my timorous hand could make would set my spirit free. Oh! my father! oh, my father! you little thought when you taught your Clara the mysteries of anatomy, to what a fearful use she would put your lessons.—And would it be right?—Oh, would it be right? One may desire death; but can any thing justify suicide?—Oh, Father in Heaven, guide me! guide me!" cried Clara, falling upon her knees and sobbing forth this prayer of agony.

Soon approaching footsteps drew her attention. And she had only time to rise and put back her damp, dishevelled hair from her tear-stained face, before the door opened, and Doreen Knight appeared, and said:

"Here is this young woman come again!"

And rudely ushering in Capitola, she closed the door and retreated.

"I declare M. Day," said Cap., laughing, "you have the best accomplished, polite and agreeable servants here that ever I met with! Think with what a courteous welcome this woman received me—'Here you are again!' she said. 'You'll come once too often for your good, and that I tell you.' I answered that every time I came it appeared to be once too often for her liking. She rejoined—'The Colonel has come home, and he don't like company, so I advise you to make your call a short one.' I assured her that I should measure the length of my visit by the breadth of my will.—But good angels, Clara! what is the matter? You look worse than death!" exclaimed Capitola, noticing for the first time the pale, wild, despairing face of her companion.

Clara clasped her hands as if in prayer, and raised her eyes with an appealing gaze into Capitola's face.

"Tell me, dear Clara, what is the matter? how can I help you? what shall I do for you?" said our heroine.

Before trusting herself to reply, Clara gazed wistfully into Capitola's eyes, as though she would have read her soul.

Cap. did not blush, nor for an instant avert her own honest, gray orbs; she let Clara gaze straight down through those clear windows of the soul into the very soul itself, where she found only truth, honesty, and courage.

The scrutiny seemed to be satisfactory, for Clara soon took the hand of her visitor, and said: "Capitola, I will tell you. It is a horrid, horrid story, but you shall know all. Come with me to my chamber."

Cap. pressed the hand that was so confidently placed in hers, and accompanied Clara to her room, where, after the latter had taken the pre-

caution to lock the door, the two girls sat down for a confidential talk.

Clara, like the author of Robin Hood's Barn, "began at the beginning" of her story, and told everything—her betrothal to Traverso Hocko; the sudden death of her father; the decision of the Orphan's Court; the departure of Traverso for the far West; or arrival at the Hidden House; the interruption of all her epistolary correspondence with her betrothed and his mother; the awful and mysterious occurrence of some heinous crime had been committed; and finally of the long, unwelcome suit of Craven Le Noir, and the present attempt to force him upon her as a husband.

Cap. listened very calmly to this story, showing very little sympathy, for there was not a bit of sentimentality about our Cap.

"And now," whispered Clara, while the pail of horror overspread her face, "by threatening me with a fate worse than death, they would drive me to marry Craven Le Noir!"

"Yes, I know I would," said Cap., as if speaking to herself, but by her tone and manner showing these simple words in the very keenest sarcasm.

"What would you do, Capitola?" asked Clara, raising her tearful eyes to the last speaker.

"Merry Mr. Craven Le Noir, and thank him, too!" said Cap. Then suddenly changing her tone, she exclaimed:

"I wish—oh! I wish I wish it was only me in your place—that it was only me they were trying to marry against my will!"

"What would you do?" asked Clara earnestly.

"What would I do? Oh! I wouldn't I make them know the difference between their Sovereign Lady and Sam the Looker? If I had been in your place, and the dastard Le Noir had said to me what he said to you, I do believe I should have stricken him dead with the lightning of my eyes! But what shall you do, my poor Clara?"

"Alas! alas! see here! this is my last resort!" replied the unhappy girl, showing the little pen knife.

"Put it away from you! put it away from you!" exclaimed Capitola, earnestly; "suicide is never, never justifiable! God is the Lord of life and death! He is the only judge whether a mortal's sorrows are to be relieved by death, and when He does not Himself release you, He means that you shall live and endure. That proves that suicide is never right, let the Roman pagans have said and done what they pleased. So no more of that. There are enough other ways of escape for you."

"Ah! what are they? You would give me life by teaching me how to escape!" said Clara, fervently.

"The first and most obvious means that suggests itself to my mind," said Cap., "is to—run away."

"Ah! that is impossible! The servants are warned; the doors are all locked; I am watched!"

"Then the next plan is equally obvious; consent to go with them to the church, and when you get there, denounce them, and claim the protection of the clergyman!"

"Ah! dear girl, that is still more impracticable. The officiating clergyman is the friend; and even if I could consent to act a deceitful part, and should go to the church as if to marry Craven, and upon getting there, denounce him, instead of receiving the protection of the clergyman, I should be restored to the hands of my guardian, and be brought back here to meet a fate worse than death," said Clara, in a tone of despair.

Capitola did not at once reply, but fell into deep thought, which lasted many minutes. Then, speaking more gravely than she had spoken before, she said:

"There is but one plan of escape left! you only remaining chance, and that full of danger!"

"Oh! why should I fear danger? What evil can befall me so great as that which now threatens me?" said Clara.

"This plan requires on your part great courage, self-control, and presence of mind."

"Teach me, teach me, dear Capitola. I will be an apt pupil!"

"I have thought it all out, and will tell you my plan. It is now eleven o'clock in the fore-

noon, and the carriage is to come for you at six this evening, I believe?"

"Yes! yes!"

"Then you have seven hours in which to save yourself. And this is my plan: First, Clara, you must change clothes with me, giving me your suit of mourning and putting on my riding habit, hat and veil. Then leaving me here in your place, you are to pull the veil down closely over your face and walk right out of the house. No one will speak to you, for they never do to me. When you have reached the yard, spring upon my horse and put whip to him for the village of Tip-Top. My servant, Wool, will ride after you, but not speak to you or approach near enough to discover your identity—for he has been ordered by his master to keep me in sight, and he has been forbidden by his mistress to intrude upon her privacy. You will reach Tip-Top by three o'clock, when the Staunton stage passes through. You may then reveal yourself to Wool, give my horse into his charge, get into the coach and start for Staunton. Upon reaching that place, put yourself under the protection of your friends, the two old physicians, and get them to prosecute your guardian for cruelty and flagrant abuse of authority. Be cool, firm, and alert, and all will be well!"

Clara, who had listened to this little Napoleon in petticoats with breathless interest, now clasped her hands in a wild ecstasy of joy as she exclaimed:

"I will try it! Oh, Capitola, I will try it! Heaven bless you for the counsel!"

"Be quick, then, change your dress, provide yourself with a purse of money, and I will give you particular directions how to make a short cut for Tip-Top! Ha, ha, ha! when they come for the bride she will be already rolling on the turnpike between Tip-Top and Staunton."

"But you! Oh, you, my generous deliverer!"

"I shall dress myself in your clothes and stay here in your place to keep you from being mistaken, so as to give you full time to make your escape."

"But you will place yourself in the enraged lion's jaws. You will remain in the power of two men who know neither justice nor mercy, who in their love or their hate fear neither God nor man. Oh, Capitola, how can I take an advantage of your generosity, and leave you here in such extreme peril? Capitola, I cannot do it."

"Well, then, I believe you must be anxious to marry Craven Le Noir."

"Oh, Capitola!"

"Well, if you are not, hurry and get ready; there is no time to be lost."

"But you! but you, my generous friend!"

"Never mind me. I shall be safe enough. I am not afraid of the Le Noirs. Bless their wigs, I should like to see them make me blanch. On the contrary, I desire above all things to be pitted against those two. How I shall enjoy their disappointment and rage. Oh! it will be a rare frolic."

While Capitola was speaking she was also busily engaged doing. She went stately to the door and turned the key in the lock, to prevent any one from looking through the key-hole, murmuring as she did it:

"I wasn't brought up among the detective policemen for nothing."

Then she began to take off her riding-habit. Quickly she dressed Clara, superintending all the details of her disguise as carefully as though she were the costumer, and was so neatly of the same size and shape of Capitola, that from behind no one would have suspected her identity.

"There, Clara, tuck your light hair out of the way; pull your cap over your eyes; gather your veil down close; draw up your figure; throw back your head; walk with a little springy way and swag, as if you didn't care a rapson for anybody, and—there! I declare, nobody could tell you from me," exclaimed Capitola, in delight, as she completed the disguise and the instructions of Clara.

Then Capitola dressed herself in Clara's deep mourning robes. And then the two girls sat down to compose themselves for a few minutes, while Capitola gave new and particular directions for Clara's course and conduct, so as to ensure, as far as human foresight could do it, the safe

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termination of her perilous adventure. By the
time they had ended their talk the hall clock
struck twelve.

"There, it is full time you should be off. Be
calm, be cool, be firm, and God bless you, Clara.
Dear girl, if I were only a young man, I would de-
liver you by the strength of my own arm, without
subjecting you to inconvenience or danger," said
Cap, gallantly as she led Clara to the chamber
door, and carefully gathered her thick veil in close
folds over her face, so as entirely to conceal it.

"Oh, may the Lord in Heaven bless and pre-
serve and reward you, my brave, my noble, my
heroic Capitola!" said Clara, fervently, with the
tears rushing to her eyes.

"Boosh," said Cap. "If you go doing the senti-
mental you won't look like me a bit, and that will
spoil all. There, keep your veil close, for it's
windy, you know; throw back your head, and
swing yourself along with a swagger, as if you
didn't care a h—m! for anybody, and—there you
are," said Cap, pushing Clara out and shutting
the door behind her.

Clara paused an instant to offer up one short
fervent prayer for her success and Capitola's
safety, and then following her instructions, went
on.

Nearly all girls are clever imitators, and Clara
readily adopted Capitola's light, springy away-
ing walk, and met old Dorcas Knight in the hall,
without exciting the slightest suspicion of her
identity.

"Humph," said the woman; "so you are going.
I advise you not to come back again."

Clara threw up her head with a swagger, and
went on.

"Very well, you may scorn my words, but if you
know your own good, you'll follow my advice,"
said Dorcas Knight harshly.

Clara threw up her head and passed out.
Before the door Wool was waiting with the
horses. Keeping her face closely veiled, Clara
went to Capitola's pony. Wool came and helped
her into the saddle, saying:

"Xer does right, Miss Cap., to keep your face
kivered; it is awful windy, ain't it though? I
kin scarcely keep the hat from blowing off my
head."

With an impatient jerk after the manner of
Capitola, Clara signified that she did not wish to
converse. Wool dropped obediently behind,
mounted his horse, and followed at a respectful
distance, until Clara turned her horse's head and
took the bridle-path towards Tip-Top. This
move filled poor Wool with dismay. Riding to-
wards her he exclaimed:

"Deed, Miss Cap., yer mas' sence me for
speakin' now. We're meschier if yer ajoin' to?"

For an answer Clara, feigning the temper of
Capitola, suddenly wheeled her horse, elevated
her riding whip, and galloped upon Wool in a
threatening manner.

Wool dodged and backed his horse with all
possible expedition—exclaiming in consternation.
"Dar! Miss Cap., I won't go for to ax you any
more questions—no—not if yer rides straight
to Old Nick or Black Donald!"

Whereupon receiving this apology in good part
Clara again turned her horse's head and rode on
her way.

Wool followed, bemoaning the destiny that
kept him between the fierce fires of his old
master's despotism and his young mistress's ca-
pries, and muttering:

"I know old marse and dis young gal ain't goin'
to be the death of me. I knows it jes' as well as
nuffin at all. I 'clare to man, if it aint nuff to
make anybody go leave themselves right into a
grist mill and be ground up for flour."

Wool spoke no more until they got to Tip Top,
when Clara, still closely veiled, rode up to the
stage office just as the coach, half filled with
passengers, was about to start. Springing from
her horse, she went up to Wool and said:

"Here, man, take this horse back to Hurricane
Hall. Tell Major Warfield that Miss Black re-
mains at the Hidden House in imminent danger.
Ask him to ride there and bring her home. Tell
Miss Black, when you see her, that I reached Tip
Top safe and in time to take the coach. Tell her
I will never cease to be grateful. And now, here
is a half eagle for your trouble. Good-bye, and
God bless you." And she put the piece in his
hand and took her place in the coach, which im-
mediately started.

As for Wool!!!—From the time that Clara
had thrown aside her veil and began to speak to
him, he had stood staring and staring—his con-
sternation growing and growing—until it had
seemed to have turned him into stone—from
which state of petrification he did not recover
until he saw the stage coach roll rapidly away,
carrying off—whom?—Capitola, Clara, or the
Evil one?—Wool could not have told which! He
presently astounded the people about the stage
office by leaving his horse and taking to his
heels after the stage coach, vociferating:

"Murder! murder! help! help! stop thief!
stop thief! stop the coach! stop the coach!"

"What is the matter, man?" said a constable,
trying to head him.

But Wool ineffectually ran over that officer,
throwing him down and keeping on his headlong
course, hot, coat-tail streaming, and legs and
arms flying like the sails of a windmill, as he
tried to overtake the coach, crying:

"Help! Murder! Head the horses! Stop
the coach! Old Marse told me not to lose sight
of you, Oh, for hebbens's sake, good people, stop
the coach!"

When he got to a gate, instead of taking time
to open it, he rolled himself summerset-like right
over it. When he met man or woman, instead of
turning from his straight course, he knocked them
over and passed on, garments flying, and legs and
arms circulating with the velocity of a wheel.

The people whom he successively met and
overthrew in his course, picking themselves up,
and gett: into the village, reported that there
was a furious madman broke loose, who attacked
every one he met.

And so over a man and boy in the village who
could mount a horse started in hot pursuit.
Only race horses would have beaten the speed
with which Wool ran, urged on by fear. It was
nine miles on the turnpike road from Tip-Top
that the horsemen overtook and surrounded
Wool, who seeing himself hopelessly environed
fell down upon the ground and rolled and kicked,
swearing that he would not be taken alive to have
his eyelids cut off!

It was not until after a desperate resistance
that he was finally taken, bound, put in a wagon
and carried back to the village, where he was re-
cognized as Major Warfield's man, and a messen-
ger was despatched for his master.

And not until he had been repeatedly assured
that no harm should befall him, did Wool gain
composure enough to say, amid tears of cruel
grief and fear:

"Oh, marse, my young missens, Miss Black
done been conjured and bewitched and turned
into somebody else, right afore me! My own two
looking eyes, and gone off in dat coach! 'Deed
she is, and ole marse kill me! 'deed he will, 'deed
he will. He went and ordered me not to take my
eyes offen her, and no more I didn't. But what
good that do, when she turned to somebody else,
and went off right afore my two looking eyes!

But ole marse won't listen to reason! He'll kill
me, I know he will!" whimpered Wool, refusing
to be comforted.

CHAPTER XL

CLARA IN CAPTIVITY.

I ingered here and rescue planned
For Clara and for me. —SCOTT.

Meanwhile how fared it with Capitola in the
Hidden House?

"I am in for it now!" said Cap., as she closed
the door behind Clara; "am in for it now! It
will be a jolly important adventure! What will
Wool do when he discovers that he has 'lost sight'
of me? What will uncle say when he finds out
what I've done? Who—ew! Uncle will explode!
I wonder if the walls at Hurricane Hall will be
strong enough to stand it? Wool will go mad!
I don't if he will ever do a bit more good in this
world!"

"But above all, I wonder what the Le Noirs,
father and son, will say when they find that the
heirless has flown, and a 'beggar,' as uncle flatters
me by calling me, will be here in her place! Wile—ew—ew! There will be a tornado!
Cap., child, they'll murder you! I shan't just what
they'll do. They'll kill and eat you, Cap., with-
out any salt! or they may look you up in the

haunted room to live with the ghost, Cap., and
that would be worse!"

"Hush! here comes Dorcas Knight! Now I
must make believe I'm Clara, and do the senti-
mental up brown!" concluded Capitola, as she
seated herself near the door where she could be
heard, and began to sob softly.

Dorcas rapped.

Cap. sobbed in response.

"Are you coming to luncheon, Miss Day?" in-
quired the woman.

"Ee—hee! Ee—hee! Ee—hee! I do not
want to eat," sobbed Cap., in a low and smother-
ed voice. Any one would have thought she
was drowned in tears.

"Very well—just as you like," said the woman,
harshly, as she went away.

"Well, I declare," laughed Cap., "I did that
quite as well as an actress could! But now what
am I to do? How long can I keep this up? Heigh-ho! let the world slide! I'll not revert
myself until I'm driven to it, for when I dol-
Cap, child, you'll get chawed right up!"

A little later in the day Dorcas Knight came
again, and rapped at the door.

"Ee—hee! Ee—hee! Ee—hee!" sobbed Cap.

"Miss Day, your cousin, Craven Le Noir,
wishes to speak with you alone."

"Ee—hee! Ee—hee! Ee—hee! I cannot
see him," sobbed Cap., in a low and suffocating
voice.

The woman went away, and Cap. suffered no
other interruption until six o'clock, when Dorcas
Knight once more rapped saying:

"Miss Day, your uncle is at the front door
with the carriage, and he wishes to know if you
are ready to obey him."

"Ee—hee! Ee—hee! Ee—hee!—le—to—tell
him yes!" sobbed Cap., as if her heart would
break.

The woman went off with this answer, and
Capitola hastily enveloped her form in Clara's
large black shawl, put on Clara's black bonnet,
and tied her thick mourning veil closely over her
face.

"A pretty bridal dress this! but, however, I
suppose these men are no more particular about
my costume than they are about their own con-
duct," said Cap.

She had just drawn on her gloves when she
heard the footsteps of two men approaching.
They rapped at the door.

"Come in," she sobbed, in a low, broken voice,
that might have belonged to any girl in deep dis-
tress, and she put a white cambric handkerchief
up to her eyes and drew her thick veil closely
over her face.

The two Le Noirs immediately entered the room.
Craven approached her, and whispered, softly:

"You will forgive me this, my share in these
proceedings after a while, sweet Clara. The Ra-
vine women did not love the Roman youths the
least that they were forcibly made wives by them."

"Ee—hee! Ee—hee! Ee—hee!" sobbed Cap.,
entirely concealing her face in her white cambric
handkerchief under her impenetrable veil.

"Come, come! we lose time," said the elder,
Le Noir. "Draw her arm within yours, Craven,
and lead her out."

The young man did as he was directed, and led
Cap. from the room. It was now quite dark—the
long dreary passage was only dimly lighted by a
hanging lamp, so that with the care she took there
was scarcely a possibility of Capitola's being dis-
covered. They went on, Craven Le Noir whis-
pering hypocritical apologies, and Cap. replying
only by sobs.

When they reached the outer door, they found
a tremendous darkness drawn up before the house.
To this Craven Le Noir led Capitola, placed her
within and took the seat by her side. Colonel
Le Noir placed himself on the front seat opposite
them, and the carriage was driven rapidly off.

An hour's ride brought the party to an obscure
church in the depths of the forest, which Capitola
recognized by the cross on its top, to be a Roman
Catholic Chapel.

Here the carriage drove up and the two Le Noirs
got out and assisted Capitola to alight.

They then led her into the church, which was
dimly illumined by a pair of wax candles burning
before the altar. A priest in his sacerdotal robes
was seated at a table, a few country people were
seated dimly about among the pews, at their
private devotions.

Guarded by Craven Le Noir on the right, and Colonel Le Noir on the left, Capitola was marched up the aisle and placed before the altar.

Colonel Le Noir then went and spoke apart to the officiating priest, saying, in a tone of dissatisfaction:

"I told you, sir, that as our bride was an orphan, recently bereaved, and still in deep mourning, we wished the marriage ceremony to be strictly private, and you gave me to understand, sir, that vacant. Yet here I find half a score of people. How is this?"

"Sir," replied the priest, "it is true, that at this hour of the evening, the chapel is most likely to be vacant, but it is not therefore certain to be so, nor did I promise as much. Our chapel is, as that all who please may come and pray. These people that you see here are hard-working farmers, labourers, who have no time to come in the day, and who are now here to offer up their evening prayers and, also, some of them to examine their consciences preparatory to confession. They can certainly be no interruption to the ceremony."

"Egad, I don't know that," muttered Colonel Le Noir between his teeth.

As for Cap, the sight of other persons present in the chapel filled her heart with joy and exultation, inasmuch as it insured her final safety. And so she just abandoned herself to the spirit of frolic that possessed her, and anticipated with the keenest relish the denouement of her strange adventure.

"Well, what are we waiting for? Proceed, sir, proceed," said Colonel Le Noir, as he took Cap. by the shoulders and placed her on the left side of his son, while he himself stood behind ready to give the bride away.

The ceremony immediately commenced.

The prologue beginning—"Dearly beloved, we are gathered together here," etc., etc., etc., was read.

The solemn exhortation to the contracting parties commencing—"I require and charge you both, as ye shall answer in the dreadful day of judgment when the secrets of all hearts shall be disclosed, that if either of you know any just cause together," etc., etc., etc., followed.

Capitola listened to all this with the deepest attention, saying to herself—"Well, I declare, this getting married is really awfully interesting. If it were not for Herbert Greyson, I'd just let it go right straight on to the end, and see what would happen next."

While Cap. was making these mental comments the priest was asking the bridegroom:

"Wilt thou have this woman to be thy wedded wife," etc., etc., "so long as ye both shall live?"

To which Craven Le Noir, in a sonorous voice responded:

"I Will."

"Indeed you will? We'll see that presently," said Cap. to herself.

The priest then turning towards the bride, inquired:

"Wilt thou have this man to be thy wedded husband," etc., etc., "so long as ye both shall live?"

To which he bride, throwing aside her veil, answered firmly:

"Not if he were the last man and I the last woman on the face of the earth, and the human race were about to become extinct, and the Angel Gabriel came down from above to ask of me as a personal favour."

The effect of this outburst, this revelation, this explosion, may be imagined but can never be adequately described.

The priest dropped his book, and stood with lifted hands and open mouth and staring eyes as though he had raised a ghost!

The two Le Noirs simultaneously sprang forward, astonishment, disappointment and rage contending in their blanched faces!

"Who are you girls?" exclaimed Colonel Le Noir.

"Capitola Black, your honour's glory!" she replied, making a deep courtesy.

"What the foul fiend is the meaning of all this?" in the same breath inquired the father and son.

Cap. put her thumb to the side of her nose and whirling her four fingers, replied:

"It means, your worships' excellencies, that—you-can't—come if it's no go this chicken-won't fight. It means that the fat's in the fire, and the cat's out of the bag. It means confusion! wigs! It means that the game's up, the plays about to be married, and the principal performer—that's I—is going to be called out and the applause of the audience?" Then suddenly changing her mocking tone to one of great severity, she said:

"It means that you have been outwitted by a girl; it means that your purposed victim has fled, and is by this time in safety. It means that you, two, precious father and son would be a pair of knaves if you had sense enough; but, failing in that, you are only a pair of fools."

By this time the attention of the few persons in the church was aroused. They all arose to let their places and listen, and some of them to these latter Capitola now suddenly turned and said, aloud:

"Good people, I am Capitola Black, the niece and ward of Major Ira Warfield, of Hurricane Hall, whom you all know; and now I claim your protection while I shall tell you the meaning of my presence here."

"Don't listen to her! she is a maniac!" cried Colonel Le Noir.

"Stop her mouth!" cried Craven, springing upon Capitola, and holding her tightly in the grasp of his right arm, while he covered her lips and nostrils with his large left hand.

Capitola struggled so fiercely to free herself that Craven had enough to do to hold her, and so was not aware of a ringing footstep coming up the aisle, until a stunning blow dealt from a strong arm covered his face with blood, and stretched him out at Capitola's feet.

Cap. flushed, breathless, and confused, looked up, and was caught to the bosom of Herbert Greyson, who, pale with concentrated rage, held her closely, and inquired:

"Capitola, what violence is this which has been done you?—Explain, who is the aggressor?"

"Wait—wait—wait until I get my breath!—there! that was good. That villain has all but strangled me to death. Oh, Herbert, I'm so delighted you've come! How is it that you always drop right down at the right time and on the right spot?" said Cap., while gasping for breath.

"I will tell you another time. Now I want an explanation."

"Yes, Herbert, I also wish to explain—not only to you, but to these gaping good people. Let me have a hearing," said Cap.

"She is mad—absolutely mad!" cried Colonel Le Noir, who was assisting his son to rise.

"SILENCE, sir!" thundered Herbert Greyson, advancing towards him with uplifted and threatening hand.

"Gentlemen, gentlemen! pray remember that distressed priest."

"Craven, this is no place for us—let us go and pursue our fugitive ward," whispered Colonel Le Noir to his son.

"We might as well; for it is clear that all is over here," replied Craven.

And the two baffled villains turned to leave the place. But Herbert Greyson, speaking up said:

"Good people! prevent the escape of those men until we hear what this young lady has to say to them, and we may judge whether to let them go or to take them before a magistrate."

The people flew to the doors and windows and secured them, and then surrounded the two Le Noirs, who found themselves prisoners.

"Now, Capitola, tell us how it is that you are here?" said Herbert Greyson.

"Well, that elder man," said Cap., "is the guardian of a young heiress, who was betrothed to a worthy young man, one Dr. Traverse Rooker."

"My friend," interrupted Herbert.

"Yes, Mr. Greyson, your friend. The engagement was approved by the young lady's father, who gave them his dying blessing. Nevertheless, in the face of all this, this guardian, appointed by the Orphans' court to take charge of the heiress and her fortune, undertakes, for his own ends, to compel the young lady to

marry his own son. To drive her to this measure, he does not hesitate to use every species of cruelty. This night he was to have forced her to this altar. But in the interval to-day, I chanced to visit her at the house where she was confined. Being informed by her of her distressing situation, and having no time to help her in any better way, I just changed clothes with her. She unsuspectedly in my dress. And those two heroes there, mistaking me for her, forced me in to a carriage and dragged me hither to be married against my will. And instead of catching an heiress, they caught a Tartar—that's all! And now, Herbert, let the two poor wretches go hide their mortification, and do you take me home, for I am immensely tired of doing the sentimental, making speeches, and piling up the agonies."

While Cap. was delivering this long oration, the two Le Noirs had made several essays to interrupt and contradict her, but were effectively prevented by the people, whose sympathies were all with the speaker. Now, at Herbert Greyson's command, they released the culprits, who, threatening loudly, took their departure.

Herbert then led Capitola out, and placed her upon her own pony, Gyp, which, to her unbounded astonishment, she found there in charge of Wool, who was also mounted upon his own hack.

Herbert Greyson threw himself into the saddle of a third horse, and the three took the road to Hurricane Hall.

"And now," said Capitola, as Herbert rode up to her side, "for mercy's sake tell me, before I go crazy with conjecture, how it happened that you dropped down from the sky at the very moment and on the very spot where you were needed? and where you lit upon Wool and the horses?"

"It is very simple when you come to understand it," said Herbert smiling. "In the first place, you know I graduated at the last Commencement."

"Yes."

"Well, I have just received a Lieutenant's commission in a regiment that is ordered to join General Scott in Mexico."

"Oh, Herbert, that is news, and I don't know whether to be in despair or ecstasy!" said Cap. ready to laugh or cry as a feather's weight might tip the scales in which she balanced Herbert's new honors with his approaching peril.

"If there's any doubt about it, I decidedly recommend the latter emotion!" said Herbert, laughing.

"When do you go?" inquired Cap.

"Our regiment embarks from Baltimore on the first of next month. Meanwhile I got leave of absence to come and spend a week with my friends at home."

"Oh, Herbert, I—I am in a quandary! But you haven't told me yet how you happened to meet with Wool and to come here just in the nick of time."

"I am just going to do so. Well, you see, which I reached about three o'clock. And there I found Wool in the hands of the Philistines, suspected of being mad, from the manner in which he raved about losing sight of you. Well, of course, like a true knight, I delivered my lady's hand from his grasp, and reassured him, and made him mount his own horse and take charge of you."

After which I mounted the beast that I had hired to convey me to Hurricane Hall, and we all set off thither. I confess that I was exceedingly anxious on your account, for I could make nothing whatever of Wool's wild story of your supposed metamorphosis. I thought it best to make a circuit, and take the Hidden House in our course, to make some inquiries there as to what had really happened."

I had got a little bewildered between the dark night and the strange road, and seeing the light in the church, I had just ridden up to inquire my way, when to my astonishment I saw you within, before the altar, strutting the rest. And now let us ride on quickly, for I have a strong presentiment that Major Warfield is suffering the tortures of a lost soul through anxiety upon your account," concluded Herbert Greyson.

"Please, Marse Herbert and Miss Cap., don't you tell ole marse nuffen 'tall 'bout my losin' sight of you," pleaded Wool.

"We shall tell your old master all about it."

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"During this long oration, the several essays to interfere were effectively pronounced sympathies were all at Herbert Greyson's the sulphureous, who, threatened departure. Clara, then, and placed her typ, which, to her un- found there; in charge mounted upon his own

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Wool, for I would not have him miss the pleasure of hearing this adventure on any account? but I promise to bear you harmless through it," said Herbert, as they galloped rapidly towards home.

They reached Hurricane Hall by eight o'clock, and in good time for supper. They found Old Hurricane storming all over the house, and ordering everybody off the premises, in his fury of anxiety upon Capito's account. But when the party arrived, surprised at seeing them in the company of Herbert Greyson, quite revolutionized his mood, and forgetting to rage, he gave them all a hearty welcome.

And when after supper was over, and they were all gathered around the comfortable fireside, and Herbert related the adventures and feats of Capito at the Hidden House, and in the Forest Chapel, the old man grasped the hand of his favorite, and with his stormy old eyes full of rain, said:

"You deserve to have been a man, Cap. I indeed you do, my girl!"

That was his highest style of praise. Then Herbert told his own little story of getting his commission and being ordered to Mexico.

"God bless you, lad, and save you in the battle, and bring you home with victory!" was Old Hurricane's comment.

Then seeing that the young people were quite worn out with fatigue, and feeling not averse to his own comfortable couch, Old Hurricane broke up the circle, and they all retired to rest.

CHAPTER XII.

AN UNEXPECTED VISITOR AT MARSH'S COTTAGE.

"Friend, wilt thou give me shelter, 'twas the stranger meekly saith; 'My life is hunted, evil men are following on my path.'"

Marsh Rocks sat by her lonely fireside.

The cottage was not changed in any respect since the day upon which we first of all found her there. There was the same bright, little wood fire; the same clean hearth, and the identical faded carpet on the floor. There was the dresser with its glistening crockery-ware on the right, and the shelves with Travers's old school-books on the left of the fire-place.

The widow herself had changed in nothing except that her clean, black dress was threadbare and rusty, and her patient face whiter and thinner than before.

And now there was no eager restlessness; no frequent listening and looking towards the door. Alas! she could not now expect to hear her boy's light and springing step and cheerful voice as he hurried home at eventide from his daily work. Travers was far away at St. Louis undergoing the cares and trials of a friendless young physician trying to get into practice. Six months had passed since he took leave of her, and there was as yet no hope of his returning even to pay a visit.

So Marsh sat very still and sad, bending over her needle-work, without ever turning her head in the direction of the door. True, he wrote to her every week. No Wednesday ever passed without bringing her a letter written in a strong, buoyant and encouraging strain. Still she missed the voice very sadly. It was dreary to rise up in the empty house every morning; dreary to sit down to her solitary meals, and dreary still to go to bed in her lonely room without having received her boy's kiss and heard his cheerful good-night. And it was her custom every night to read over Travers's last letter before retiring to bed.

It was getting on towards ten o'clock when she folded up her work and put it away, and drew her boy's latest epistle from her bosom to read. It ran as follows:

St. Louis, Dec. 1, 184.

My DEAR MOTHER:—I am very glad to hear that you continue in good health, and that you do not work too hard, or miss me too sadly. It is the greatest comfort of my life to hear good news of you, sweet mother. I count the days from one letter to another, and read every last letter over daily until I get a new one. You insist upon my telling you how I am getting on, and whether I am out of money. I am doing quite well, ma'am, and have some funds left!

have quite a considerable practice. It is true that my professional services are in request only among the very poor, who pay me with their thanks and good wishes. But I am very glad to pay off a small part of the debt of gratitude I owe to the benevolence of this world by doing all I can in my turn for the needy. And even if I had never myself been the object of a good man's benevolence, I should still have desired to serve the indigent: "for whoso giveth to the poor lendeth to the Lord," and I "like the security." Therefore, sweet mother of mine, be at ease, for I am getting on swimmingly—with one exception. I still I do not hear from our Clara. Six months have now passed, during which, despite of the seeming silence, I have written to her every week; but not one letter or message have I received from her in return! And now you tell me that you have not received a single letter from her either. I know not what to think. Anxiety upon her account is my one sole trouble. Not that I wrong the dear girl by one instant's doubt of her constancy; no; my soul upon her truth! If I could do that, I should be most unworthy of her love. No, mother; you and I know that Clara is true. But, ah, we do not know to what sufferings she may be subjected by Le Noir. Mother, I am about to ask a great, perhaps an unreasonable, favor of you. If it so down into the neighborhood of the Hidden House, and make inquiries, and try to find out Clara's real condition. If it be possible, put yourself into communication with her, and tell her that I judge her heart by my own, and have the firmest faith in her constancy, even though I have written to her every week for six months without ever having received an answer. I feel that I am putting you to expense and trouble, but my great anxiety about Clara, which I am sure you share, must be my excuse. I kiss your dear and honored hands; and remain ever,

Your loving son and faithful servant,

TRAVERS ROCKS.

"I must try to go. It will be an awful expense, because I know no one there, and I shall have to board at the Tavern at Tip-Top while I am making inquiries—for I dare not approach the dwelling of Gabriel Le Noir!" said Marsh Rocks, as she folded up her letter, and replaced it in her bosom.

Just at that moment she heard the sound of wheels approach, and a vehicle of some sort draw up to the gate, and some one speaking without.

She went to the door, and listening, heard a girlish voice say:

"A dollie now?—Yes, certainly; here it is. There, you may go now."

She recognized the voice, and with a cry of joy jerked the door open just as the carriage rolled away. And the next instant Clara Day was in her arms.

"Oh, my darling! my darling! my darling! is this really you? Really, really you, and no dream?" cried Marsh Rocks, in a flutter of excitement, as she strained Clara to her bosom.

"Yes, it is I, sweet friend; come to stay with you a long time, perhaps," said Clara, softly, returning her caresses.

"Oh, my lamb! my lamb! what a joyful surprise! I do think I must go crazy! Where did you come from, my pet? Who came with you? When did you start? Did Le Noir consent to your coming? And how did it happen?—But dear child, how worn and weary you look. You must be very tired. Have you had supper? Oh, my darling! come and lie down on this soft lounge, while I put away your things and get you some refreshment," said Marsh Rocks, in a delirium of joy, as she took off Clara's hat and sack, and laid her down to rest on the lounge, which she wheeled up near the fire.

"Oh, my sweet, we have been so anxious about you! Travers and myself. Travers is still at St. Louis, low, getting on slowly. He has written to you every week, and so indeed have I, but we neither of us had so much as one letter in reply. And yet neither of us ever doubted your true heart, my child. We knew that the letters must have been lost, miscarried, or intercepted."

said Marsh, as she busied herself putting on the tea-kettle.

"They must indeed, since my experience in regard to letters exactly corresponds with yours."

I have written every week to both of you, yet never received one line in reply from either," said Clara.

"We know it," we said so. Oh, those Le Noirs! those Le Noirs! But, my darling, you are perfectly exhausted, and though I have asked you a half an hundred questions, you shall not reply to one of them, nor talk a bit more until you have rested and had refreshment. Here, my love, is Travers's last letter. It will amuse you to lie and read it while I am getting tea," said Marsh, taking the paper from her bosom and handing it to Clara, and then placing the stand with the light near the head of her couch, that she might see to read it without rising.

And while Clara, well pleased, perused and smiled over her loved letter, Marsh Rocks laid the cloth and spread a delicate repast of tea, milk-toast and poached eggs, of which she tenderly pressed her visitor to partake.

And when Clara was somewhat refreshed by food and rest, she said:

"Now, dear mamma, you will wish to hear how it happens that I am with you to-night."

"Not unless you feel quite rested, dear girl."

"I am rested sufficiently for the purpose; besides I am anxious to tell you. And oh, dear mamma I could just now sit in your lap, and lay my head upon your kind, soft bosom so willingly."

"Come, then, Clara. Come, then, my darling," said Marsh, tenderly, holding out her arms.

"No, no, mamma, you are too little, it would be a sin," said Clara, smiling; "but I will sit by you and put my hand in yours, and rest my head against your shoulder while I tell you all about it."

"Come, then, my darling," said Marsh Rocks. Clara took the offered seat, and when she was fixed to her liking, she commenced and related to her friend a full history of all that had occurred to her at the Hidden House, from the moment that she had first crossed its threshold to the hour in which, through the courage and address of Capito, she was delivered from imminent peril.

"And now," said Clara, in conclusion, "I have come hither in order to get Dr. Williams to make one more appeal for me to the Orphans' Court. And when it is proved that a traitor my guardian has been to his trust, I have no doubt the judge will appoint some one else in his place, or at least see that my father's last wish in regard to my residence is carried into effect."

"Heaven grant it, my child! Heaven grant it! Oh, those Le Noirs! those Le Noirs! I were ever in the world before such ruthless villains and accomplished hypocrites!" said Marsh Rocks, clasping her hands in the strength of her emotions.

A long time yet they talked together, and then they retired to bed, and still talked until they fell asleep in each other's arms.

The next morning the widow arose early, gazed a little while with delight upon the sleeping daughter of her heart, pressed a kiss upon her cheek so softly as not to disturb her rest, and then, leaving her still in the deep, sweet sleep of wearied youth, she went down stairs to get a nice breakfast.

Luckily a farmer's cart was just passing the road before the cottage on its way to market.

Marsh took out her little purse from her pocket, called the driver, and expended half her little store in purchasing two young chickens, some eggs, and some dried peaches, saying to herself:

"Dear Clara always had a good appetite, and healthy young human nature must live substantially, in spite of all its little heart-aches."

While Marsh was preparing the chicken for the widow, the door at the foot of the stairs opened, and Clara came in, looking, after her night's rest, as fresh as a rose-bud.

"What! up with the sun, my darling!" said Marsh, going to meet her.

"Yes, mamma. 'Oh! it is so good to be here with you in this nice, quiet place, with no one to make me shudder. But you must let me help you, mamma. See! I will set the table and make the toast.'"

"Oh, Miss Clara—"

"Yes, I will! I have been ill-used and made miserable, and now you must set me, mamma, and let me have my own way, and help you to

cook our little meals and to make the house tidy, and afterwards to work those button holes in the shirte you were spoiling your gentle eyes over last night. Oh! if they will only let me stay here with you and be at peace, we shall be very happy together, you and I!" said Clara, as she drew out the little table and laid the cloth.

"My dear child, may the Lord make you as happy as your sweet affection would make me!" said Marah.

"We can work for our living together," continued Clara, as she gallantly fitted about from the dresser to the table, placing the cups and saucers and plates—"you can sew the seams and do the plain hemming, and I can work the button holes and stitch the bosoms, collars and wristbands. And if the worst comes to the worst, we can hang out our little shingle before the cottage gate, inscribed with:

MRS. ROCKE AND DAUGHTER,
SEWING MACHINES.

Orders executed with neatness and dispatch.

"We'd drive a thriving business, mamma, I assure you," said Clara, as she sat down on the low stool at the hearth and began to toast the bread.

"I trust in Heaven that it will never come to that with you, my dear."

"Why? why mamma? why should I not taste of toil and care as well as others? a thousand times better than myself! Why should not I work as well as you and Traverser, mamma? I stand upon the broad platform of human rights, and I say I have just as good a right to work as others," said Clara, with a pretty assumption of obstinacy, as she placed the plate of toast upon the board.

"Doubtless, dear Clara, you may play at work just as much as you please; but heaven forbid Mrs. Locke, as she placed the coffee-pot and the dish of broiled chicken on the table.

"Why, mamma? I do not think that is a good prayer at all. That is a wicked, proud prayer, really told as well as others people's daughters, I'd like to be informed?" said Clara, mockingly, as they both took their seats at the table.

"I think, dear Clara, that you must have contracted some of your eccentric little friend Capito's ways, from putting on her habit. I never before saw you in such gay spirits," said Mrs. Locke, as she poured out the coffee.

"Oh, mamma, it is but the glad rebound of that dark prison of the Hidden House, and to be home with you! But tell me, mamma, is my old

"No, my dear, no tenant has been found for it. The property is in the hands of an agent to let; but the house remains quite vacant and deserted."

"Why is that?" asked Clara.

"Why, my love for the strangest reason. The foolish country people say that since the doctor's death, the place has been haunted."

"Haunted!"

"Yes, my dear, so the foolish people say, and they get wiser once to believe them."

"What exactly do they say? I hope—I hope they do not trifle with my dear father's honoured name and memory?"

"Oh, no, my darling—no; but they say that although the house is quite empty and deserted by the living, strange sights and sounds are heard and seen by passers-by at night. Lights appear at the upper windows from which pale faces look out."

"How very strange!" said Clara.

"Yes, my dear, and these stories have gained such credence that no one can be found to take the house."

"So much the better, dear mamma, for if the new judge of the Orphans' Court should give a decision in our favour, as he must, when he hears the evidence, old and new, and you and I can move making line of business."

"Heaven grant it, my dear. But now, Clara, my love, we must lose no time in seeing Doctor Williams, lest your guardian should pursue you here and give you fresh trouble."

Clara assented to this, and they immediately arose from the table, cleared away the service,

put the room in order, and went up stairs to put on their bonnets—Mrs. Locke sending Clara her own best bonnet and shawl. When they were quite ready, they looked up the house and set out for the town.

It was a bright, frosty, invigorating winter's morning, and the two friends walked rapidly until they reached Doctor Williams' house.

The kind old man was at home, and was much surprised and pleased to see his visitors. He inquired them into his parlor, and when he had heard their story, he said:

"This is a most serious affair than the must be brought from the neighbourhood of the Hidden House. You are aware that the late judge of the Orphans' Court has been appointed to a high office under the government at Washington. The man that has his place is a person of sound integrity, who will do his duty. It remains only for us to prove the justice of our cause to his satisfaction, and all will be well."

"Oh, I trust in Heaven that it will be," said Marah, fervently.

"You two must stay in my house until the affair is decided. You might possibly be safe from the real injury; but you could not be free from molestation in your unprotected condition at the cottage," said Doctor Williams.

Clara warmly expressed her thanks.

"You had better go home now and pack up what you wish to bring, and put out the fire and close up the house, and come here immediately."

"In the meantime, I will see your dear father's solicitor and be ready with my report by the time taking his hat to go."

Mrs. Locke and Clara set out for the cottage, which they soon reached.

Throwing off her bonnet and shawl, Clara said:

"Now, mamma, the very first thing I shall do will be to write to Traverser, so that we can send the letter by to-day's mail, and set his mind at rest. I shall simply tell him that our mutual letters have failed to reach their destination, but that I am now on a visit to you, and that while I remain here nothing can interrupt our correspondence. I shall not speak of the coming suit, until we shall see how it will end."

Mrs. Locke approved this plan, and placed writing materials on the table. And while the packing up what was needful to take with them to the doctor's, and putting out the fire, Clara wrote bonnets, looked up the house, and set out. They left at the post-office just in time to mail their letter, and they reached the doctor's house just as he himself walked up to the door, accompanied by his old client and her friend, and they all went into the house together.

In the doctor's study the whole subject of Clara's flight and its occasion was talked over, and the lawyer agreed to commence proceedings immediately.

CHAPTER XLII.

CAP. "RESTS ON HER LAURELS" AND "SPOILS FOR A FIGHT."

"It's hardly in a body's power.

To keep at times true being sour.

To show how things are shared;

How best o' things are whirled in want.

While coofs and countless thousands rant.

And how we work our way."

—BURNS.

Leaving Clara Day and Marah Locke in a home of safety, plenty and kindness, in the old doctor's house, we must run down to Hurricane Hall to see what mischief Cap. has been getting into since we left her! In truth, none. Cap. had but such a surfeit of adventures, that she was fain to lie by just now nothing to do—no tyrants to take down, deliver, and Cap. was again in danger of "spoiling the Hall—Herbert Greyson whom she vowed Cap. had to make a Miss Nancy of her! And so mornings of needle work at her work stand, with Herbert to read or to talk with her; sober after-noon rides, attended by Herbert and old Hurri-

cane; and hum-drum evenings at the chess-board, with the same Herbert, while Major Warfield dozed in a great "sleepy hollow" of an arm-chair.

One afternoon when they were out riding through the woods beyond the Doctor's farm, a shaggy, old horse rode up, and bowing to the party, presented a suspicious-looking document to Capito, and a similar one to Herbert Greyson. And while old Hurricane stared his eyes pop, the parties most interested opened the papers, which were found to be rather pressing invitations to be present at a certain solemnity at Staunton. In a word, they were subpoenaed to give testimony in the case of Williams, *vs.* Le Noir.

"Here's a diabolical dilemma!" said Old Hurricane to himself, as soon as he learned the purport of these documents; "Here I shall have to moue to bear witness against him. Suppose, losing one ward, he should say I claim to another! Ah, but he can't, without foully criminalising himself. Well, well, we shall see."

While Old Hurricane was cogitating, Cap. was exclaiming:

"Oh, now! I tell all I know! Yes, and more too!" she exclaimed, in triumph.

"More too! Oh! holy-toity! never say more too!" said Herbert, laughing.

"I will, for I'll tell all I suspect!" said Cap., galloping on ahead, in her eagerness to get home and pack up for her journey.

The next day Old Hurricane, Herbert Greyson, Capito, Pissipat and Wool went by stage to Staunton. And when they arrived at the Planters' and Farmers' Hotel, whence Herbert Greyson and Capito soon sallied forth to see Clara and Mrs. Locke, they soon found the doctor's house, and were ushered into the parlor in the presence of their friends.

The meeting between Capito and Clara, and between Mrs. Locke and Herbert, was very cordial. And then Herbert introduced Capito to Mrs. Locke, and Cap. presented Herbert to Clara. And they all entered into conversation upon the subject of the coming lawsuit, and the circumstances that led to it. And Clara and Capito related to each other all that had happened to each after their exchanging clothes and parting. And when they had laughed over their mutual adventures and misadventures, Herbert and Capito took leave and returned to their hotel.

Herbert Greyson was the most serious of the whole family. Upon reaching the hotel he went to his own room, and fell into deep reflection. And this was the course of his thoughts:

"I saw Warfield and Marah Locke are here in the same town! I brought hither upon the same errand! I to-morrow to meet in the same courtroom! And yet not either of them suspects the presence of the other. Mrs. Locke does not know that in Capito's uncle she will behold Major Warfield! He does not foresee that in Clara's matronly friend he will behold Marah Locke. And Le Noir, the cause of all their misery, will be present also. What will be the effect of this unexpected meeting?"

Ought I not to warn one or the other?—Let me think—No! for were I to warn Major Warfield he would absent himself. Should I drop a hint to Marah, she would shrink from the meeting. No, I will leave it all to Providence; perhaps the sight of her sweet, pale face and soft, appealing eyes, so full of constancy and truth, may touch that stern old heart. Heaven grant it may!" concluded Herbert Greyson.

The next day the suit came on. At an early hour Doctor Williams appeared, having in charge Clara Day, who was attended by her friend Mrs. Locke. They were accommodated with seats immediately in front of the judge.

Very soon afterwards, Major Warfield, Herbert Greyson and Capito entered, and took their seats on the witness's bench, at the right side of the court-room.

Herbert watched Old Hurricane, whose eyes were spell-bound to the bench where sat Mrs. Locke and Clara. Both were dressed in deep mourning, with their veils down and their faces instant that Marah Locke should turn her head and meet that fixed, wistful look of Old Hurricane. And he wondered what strange instinct it could be that riveted the old man's regards to that unrecognized woman.

on evenings at the chess-board, when, while Major Warfield peeped below of an arm-chair, when they were out riding beyond the Demon's Run, and up and hawking to the suspicious-looking document thrown on to Herbert Grey. Hurricane stared his eyes most interested opened the folder at a certain solemn word, they were rubbened out faintly, and Cap. was in a dilemma! "I said Old Hurricane as he learned the purport: 'Here I shall have to face to face with that demon! Suppose, I should lay claim to another! I am fully eliminating him!'"

Cap. was cogitating, Cap. was I know! Yes, and more in triumph. "I'll never say more anything." "All I suspect!" said Cap. her eagerness to get home.

Hurricane, Herbert Greyson, Wool went by stage to up at the Planters' and to Herbert Greyson and to see Clara and Mrs. and the doctor's house, and the parlor in the presence of Clara and Clara, and Herbert, was very cordial. He introduced Capito to Clara, and Clara and Capito had happened to each other and paring. And over their mutual adventure, Herbert and Capito to their hotel.

Capito and Clara, and Herbert, was very cordial. He introduced Capito to Clara, and Clara and Capito had happened to each other and paring. And over their mutual adventure, Herbert and Capito to their hotel.

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At last, to Herbert's great uneasiness, Major Warfield turned and commenced questioning him:

"Who is that woman in mourning?"

"Hom—m—that one with the flaxen curls under her bonnet is Miss Day."

"I don't mean the girl, I mean the woman sitting by her?"

"That is—hem—hem!—that is Doctor Williams sitting—"

Old Hurricane turned abruptly around and favored his nephew with a severe, scrutinizing gaze—demanding:

"Herbert, have you been drinking so early in the morning?—Dumny, sir, this is not the season for musty jugs before breakfast! Is that great, stout, round-bodied, red-faced old Doctor Williams a little woman? I see him sitting on the right of Miss Day. I didn't refer to him. I referred to that still, quiet little woman sitting on her left, who has never stirred hand or foot since she sat down there. Who is she?"

"That woman?—oh!—she?—yes—ah, let me see—she is a—Miss Day's companion!" faltered Herbert.

"To the demon with you! who does not see that?—But who is she? What is her name?" abruptly demanded Old Hurricane.

"Her name is—e—n—Did you ever see her before, sir?"

"I don't know. That is what I am trying to remember. But, sir, will you answer my question?"

"You seem very much interested in her."

"You seem very much determined not to let me know who she is! Hang it, sir! will you or will you not tell me that woman's name?"

"Certainly," said Herbert; "her name is—"

He was about to say *Marah Rooke*, but moral indignation overpowered him, and he paused.

"Well, well, her name is what?" impatiently demanded Old Hurricane.

"*Mrs. Warfield*," answered Herbert, doggedly.

And just at that unfortunate moment Marah turned her pale face and beseeching eyes around and met the full gaze of her husband!

In an instant her face blanched to marble and her head sank upon the railing before her bench.

Old Hurricane was too dark to grow pale, but his bronzed cheek turned as gray as his hair, which fairly lifted itself on his head. Grasping his walking-stick with both his hands, he tottered to his feet, and muttering:

"I'll murder you for this, Herbert!" he strode out of the court-room.

Marah's head rested for about a minute on the railing before her, and when she lifted it again, her face was as calm and patient as before.

This little incident had passed without attracting attention from any one except Capito, who, sitting on the other side of Herbert Greyson, had heard the little passage of words between him and her uncle, and had seen the latter start up and go out, and who now turning to her companion, inquired:

"What is the meaning of all this, Herbert?"

"It means—Satan! And now attend to what is going on. Mr. Sauter has stated the case, and now Stringfellow, the attorney for the other side, is just telling the judge that he stands there in the place of his client, Lieutenant Colonel Le Noir, who, being ordered to join General Taylor in Mexico, is upon the eve of setting out and cannot be here in person."

"And is that true? Won't he be here?"

"It seems not. I think he is intended to appear after what has happened, and just taken advantage of a fair excuse to absent himself."

"And is he really going to Mexico?"

"Oh, yes. I saw it officially announced in this morning's papers. And, by-the-by, I am very much afraid he is to take command of our regiment and be my superior officer!"

"Oh, Herbert, I hope and pray not! I think there is wickedness enough packed up in that man's body to sink a squadron or lose an army!"

"Well, Cap., such things will happen. Attention! There's Sauter ready to call his witnesses." And, in truth, the next moment Capito Black was called to the stand.

Cap. took her place and gave her evidence *con amore*, and with such *vim* and such expression of indignation, that Stringfellow reminded her she was there to give testimony, and not to plead the case.

Cap. rejoined that she was perfectly willing to do *testis*. And so she continued not only to tell the facts, but to express her opinions as to the motives of Le Noir, and give her judgment as to what should be the decision of the court.

Stringfellow, the attorney for Colonel Le Noir, evidently thought that in this rash, reckless, spirited witness, he had a fine subject for forensic cross-examination! But he reckoned "without his host." He did not know Cap. He, too, "caught a Tartar." And before the cross-examination was concluded, Capito's apt and cutting replies overwhelmed him with a flood and confusion, and done more for the cause of her friend than all her parizans put together!

Other witnesses were called to corroborate the testimony of Capito, and still others were examined to prove the last expressed wishes of the late William Day, in regard to the disposal of his daughter's person during the period of her minority.

There was no effective rebutting evidence, and after some hard arguing by the attorneys on both sides, the case was closed, and the judge deferred his decision until the third day thereafter.

The parties then left the Court and returned to their several lodgings.

Old Hurricane gave no one a civil word that day. Wool was an atrocious villain, an insensate scoundrel, a cut-throat, and a black demon. Cap. was a beggar, a vagabond, and a vixen. Herbert Greyson was another beggar, besides being a knave, a fop and an impudent puppy. The ink-keeper was a swindler, the waiters thieves, the whole world was going to ruin, where it well deserved to go, and all mankind to be damned as he hoped and trusted they would!

And all this tornado of passion, and invective arose just because he had unexpectedly met in the court-room the patient face and beseeching eyes of a woman, married and forsaken, loved and lost, long ago!

Was it strange that Herbert, who had so resented his treatment of Marah Rooke, should bear all his fury, injustice and abuse of himself and others with such compassionate forbearance? But he not only forbore to resent his own affronts, but also besought Capito to have patience with the old man's temper, and apologized to the host, by saying that Major Warfield had been very severely tried that day, and when calmer, would be the first to regret the violence of his own words.

Marah Rooke returned with Clara to the old doctor's house. She was more patient, silent and quiet than usual. Her face was a little paler, her eyes softer, and her tones lower—that was the only visible effect of the morning's unexpected encounter.

The next day but one all the parties concerned assembled at the court-house to hear the decision of the judge. It was given as had been anticipated in the favor of Clara Day, who was permitted in accordance with her father's approved wishes, to reside in her paternal home, under the care of Mrs. Marah Rooke. Colonel Le Noir was to remain trustee of the property, with directions from the court immediately to pay the legacies left by the late Doctor Day to Marah Rooke and Traveller Rooke, and also to pay to Clara Day, in quarterly instalments, from the revenue of her property, an annual sum of money, sufficient for her support.

The decision filled the hearts of Clara Day and her friends with joy. Forgetting time and place, they threw herself into the arms of Marah Rooke and wept with delight. All concerned in the trial then sought their lodgings.

Clara and Mrs. Rooke returned to the cottage to make preparations for removing to Willow Heights.

Doctor Williams went to the agent of the property to request him to give up the keys, which he did without hesitation.

Old Hurricane and his party packed up, to be ready for the stage to take them to Tip-Top the next day.

But that night a series of mysterious events were said to have taken place at the deserted house at Willow Heights, that filled the whole community with superstitious wonder. It was reported by numbers of gardeners and farmers, who passed that road, on their way to early market, that a perfect witches' Sabbath had been held in that empty house all night! That lights

had appeared flitting from room to room; that strange, weird faces had looked out from the windows; and wild screams had pierced the air!

The next day when this report reached the ears of Clara, and she was asked by Doctor Williams whether she would not be afraid to live there, she laughed gaily and bade him try her.

Cap. who had come over to take leave of Clara, joined her in her merriment, declared that she, for her part, doted on ghosts, and that after Herbert Greyson's departure, she should come and visit Clara and help her to entertain the specters.

Clara replied that she should hold her to her promise. And so the friends kissed and separated.

That same day saw several removals. Clara and Mrs. Rooke took up their abode at Willow Heights, and seized an hour even of that busy time, to write to Traversee and apprise him of their good fortune.

Old Hurricane and his party set out for their home, where they arrived before night-fall.

And the next day but one Herbert Greyson took leave of his friends and departed to join his company on their road to glory.

CHAPTER XLIII.

BLACK DONALD.

Fear'd, shun'd, belied ere youth had lost her force,
He hated none too much to feel remorse,
And thought the vice of wrath a sacred call,
To pay the injuries of some on all.

There was a laughing devil in his cheer,
That caus'd emotions both of rage and fear;
And where his frown of hatred darkly fell,
Hope, withering, fled, and mercy sigh'd farewell!

Herbert Greyson had been correct in his conjecture concerning the cause of Colonel Le Noir's conduct in absencing himself from the trial, or appearing there only in the person of his attorney. A proud, vain, conceited man, full of Joseph Surfaceisms, he could better have borne to be arraigned upon the charge of murder than to face the accusation of baseness that was about to be proved upon him. Being reasonably certain as to what was likely to be the decision of the Orphans' Court, he was not disappointed in hearing that judgment had been rendered in favour of his ward and her friends. His one great disappointment had been upon discovering the flight of Clara. For when he had ascertained that she had fled, he knew that all was lost—and lost through Capito!—the hated girl for whose destruction he had now another and a stronger motive—revenge.

In this mood of mind, three days before his departure to join his regiment, he sought the retreat of the outlaw. He chose an early hour of the evening as that in which he would be most likely to find Black Donald.

It was about eight o'clock when he wrapped his large cloak around his tall figure, pulled his hat low over his sinister brows, and set out to walk alone to the secret cavern in the side of the Demon's Funch Bowl.

The night was dark and the path dangerous; but his directions had been careful, so that when he reached the brink of that awful abyss, he knew precisely where to begin his descent with the least danger of being precipitated to the bottom.

And by taking a strong hold upon the stunted saplings of pine and cedar that grew down through the clefts of the ravine, and placing his feet firmly upon the points of projecting rocks, he contrived to descend the inside of that horrible abyss, which from the top seemed to be fraught with certain death to any one daring enough to make the attempt.

When about half-way down the precipice he reached the clump of cedar bushes growing in the deep cleft, and concealing the hole that formed the entrance to the cavern.

Here he paused, and looking through the entrance into a dark and apparently faithless cavern, he gave the peculiar signal-whistle which was immediately answered from within by the well-known voice of the outlaw chief, saying:

"All right my Colonel. Give us your hand. Be careful now; the floor of this cavern is several feet below the opening."

Le Noir extended his hand into the darkness within and soon felt it grasped by that of Black Donald, who, muttering, "Slowly, slowly, my dear darkness of the subterranean descent until they stood upon the firm bottom of the cavern."

They were still in the midst of a blackness that might be felt, except that from a small opening in the side of the rock a light gleamed. Towards this second opening Black Donald conducted his patron.

And stooping and passing before him, led him into an inner cavern, well lighted and rudely fitted up. Upon a large natural platform of rock, occupying the centre of the space, were some dozen bottles of brandy or whiskey, several leaves of broad and some dried venison. Around this table, seated upon fragments of rock, lugged men of the band, in various stages of intoxication. Along the walls were piles of bear-skins, some of which served as couches for six or seven men, who had thrown themselves drunkenly over them in a state of exhaustion or drunken stupor.

"Come, boys, we have not a boundless choice of apartments here, and I want to talk to my Colonel. Suppose you take your liquor and use the use of this one for an hour," said the outlaw.

The men sullenly obeyed and began to gather up the lights. Demon Dick seized one of the lights to go after them.

"Put down the gun. Satan singe your skin for you! Do you want to bring a hue and cry upon us?—Don't you know a light in the outer cavern can be seen from the outside?" roared Black Donald.

Dick quickly set down the candle and followed his comrades.

"What are you glimmering about? confound you! You can see to eat and drink well enough and add your way to your mouth in the dark, you brute!" thundered the captain.

But as there was no answer to this, and the men had retreated and left their chief with his visitor alone, Black Donald turned to Colonel Le Noir, and said:

"Well, my patron, what great matter is it that has caused you to leave the company of fair Clara Day for our grim society?"

"Ah, then it appears you are not aware that Clara Day has fled from us! has made a successful appeal to the Orphans' Court, and been taken out of our hands?" angrily replied Colonel Le Noir.

"What? My Colonel, I think I could have managed that matter better. I think if I had not have escaped me!"

"Bah! bah! stop boasting, since it was through your neglect—stop yours!—that I lost this girl."

"Mine!" exclaimed Black Donald in astonishment.

"Are yours! for if you had done your duty, performed your engagement, kept your word, and delivered me from this fatal Capitola, I had not lost my ward, nor my son his wealthy bride!" exclaimed Le Noir, angrily.

"Capitola! Capitola again! What on earth had she to do with the loss of Clara Day!" cried Black Donald, in wonder.

"Everything to do with it, sir! By a cunning artifice she delivered Clara from our power; actually set her free and covered her flight until she was in security!"

"That girl again! Ha-ha-ha-ha! Ho-ho-ho-ho!" laughed and roared Black Donald, slapping his knees.

Le Noir groaned and gnashed his teeth in rage, muttering hoarsely:

"Yes! you may laugh, confound you, since it is granted those who win to do so! you may say dollars, and what on earth have you performed to earn it?"

"Come, come, my Colonel! fair and easy! I don't know which is vulgar, to betray loss of temper of love or money, and you are doing both! However, it is between friends! But how the demon did that girl, that capital Capitola, get Clara off from right under your eyes?"

"By changing clothes with her! confound you! I will tell you all about it," replied Le

Noir, who thereupon commenced and related the whole stratagem by which Capitola freed Clara, including the manner in which she accompanied them to church and revealed herself at the altar.

Black Donald threw himself back and roared with laughter, vigorously slapping his knees and crying:

"That girl! that capital Capitola! I would not sell my prospect of possessing her for double your price!"

"Your prospect! Your prospect is about as deceptive as a *fata morgana*! What have you been doing, I ask you again, towards realizing this prospect, and earning the money you have already received?"

"Fair and easy, my Colonel! Don't let temper get the better of justice! What have I already paid me!—In the first place, I lost my time and risked my liberty watching around Hurricane Hill. Then, when I had identified the girl, and the room she slept in, by seeing in it a party to capture her! Then, when she which had captured her, I sacrificed all my good looks, transfiguring myself into a frightful old field preacher, and went to the camp-meeting to watch, among other things, for an opportunity of carrying her off! I succeeded in nothing except in fooling the wise-

comrades, whom I furnished with instruments by which they made their escape. Since that time we have had to live in this manner!"

"And since which you have abandoned all intention of getting the girl and earning the five thousand dollars," sneered Le Noir.

"Earning the remaining five thousand, you mean, Colonel! The first five thousand I consider I have already earned. It was the last five I was disposed of."

"Well?"

"Well, I have not given up either the intention of earning the money, or the hope of getting the girl; in truth, I had rather lose the money than the girl. I have been on the watch almost continually; but though I suppose she rides out frequently, I have not yet happened to hit upon her in any of her excursions. At last, however, I have fixed upon a plan for getting the witch into my power. I shall trust the execution of that plan to no one but myself!"

"Time! perdition, sir! delay in this matter is fraught with danger! Listen, sir! How Warfield got possession of this girl, or the knowledge of her history I do not know, except that it was through the agency of that accursed hag, Nancy Grewell!—but that he has her, and that he knows all about her, is but too certain! That he has not at present legal proof enough to establish her identity and her rights before a court of justice, I infer from a fact of his continuing inactive in the matter. But who can foresee how soon he may obtain all the proof that is necessary to establish Capitola's claims, and wrest the whole of this property from me? Who can tell whether he is not now secretly engaged in seeking and collecting such proof?—therefore, I repeat, that the girl must immediately be got rid of!—Donald; rid me of that creature and the day that you prove to me her death, I will double your fee!"

"Agreed, my Colonel, agreed. I have no objection to your doubling, or even quadrupling my fee! you shall find me in that as in all other matters, perfectly amenable to reason. Only I must have time. Haste would ruin us. I repeat that I have a plan by which I am certain to get the girl into my possession. A plan, the execution of which I will intrust to no other hands but my own. But I conclude as I began—

"—I must have time!"

"And how much time?" exclaimed Le Noir, again losing his patience.

"Easy, my patron. That I cannot tell you. It is imprudent to make promises, especially to you, who will take nothing into consideration, when they cannot be kept," replied Black Donald, coolly.

"But, sir, do you not know that I am ordered to Mexico, and must leave within three days!—I would see the end of this before I go!" angrily exclaimed Le Noir.

"Softly, softly my child, the Colonel!—Slow but sure!—Fair and easy goes far in a day!"

"In a word, will you do this business for me, and do it promptly?"

"Surely, surely, my patron! But I insist upon time!"

"All I go to Mexico in three days!"

"All honor go with you my Colonel! Who would keep his friend from the path of glory?"

"Perdition, sir, you trifle with me!"

"Perdition, certainly, Colonel. There perfectly agree with you; but the rest of your sentence is wrong; I don't trifle with you!"

"Nothing in the name of any absent friend of ours! I mean simply that you may go to Mexico."

"And—my business—"

"Can be done just as well, perhaps better, without you! Recollect, if you please, my Colonel, when you were absent with Harrison in the West, your great business was done *Arise without you!* And done better for that very reason! No one ever suspected your agency in that matter. The person most benefited by the death of Eugene Le Noir was far enough from the scene of his murder!"

"True! Perdition seize you! Why do you speak of things so long past?" exclaimed Le Noir, growing white to his very lips.

"To jog your worship's memory, and suggest that your honor is the last man who ought to complain of this delay, since it will be very well for you to be in a distant land, serving your country, at the time that your brother's heiress, whose property you illegally hold, is got out of your way."

"There is something in that," mused Le Noir. "There is *all* in that!"

"You have a good brain, Donald!"

"What did I tell you?—I ought to have been in the cabinet, and mean to be too. But Colonel, as I mean to conclude my part of the engagement, I should like, for fear of accidents, that you conclude yours—and settle with me before you go."

"What do you mean?"

"That you should fork over to me the remaining five thousand."

"I'll see you at the demon first," passionately exclaimed Le Noir.

"No you won't; for in that case you'd have to make away with the girl, yourself; or see old Hurricane make away with all your fortune."

"Wretch, that you are!"

"Come, come, Colonel, don't let's quarrel. The Kingdom of Satan divided against itself cannot stand. Do not let us lose time by falling out. I will get rid of the girl! You, before you go, must hand over the tin, lest you should fall in out, my Colonel. Shell out, and never fear. Capitola shall be a wife and Black Donald a widower, before many weeks shall pass."

"I'll do it. I have no profit by the knowledge, as you know; and you profit by the knowledge. I'll do it, though under protest," muttered Le Noir, grinding his teeth.

"That's my brave and generous patron," said Black Donald, as he set to attend Le Noir from the cavern, "that's my magnificent Colonel of cavalry. The man who runs such risks for you, should be very handsomely remunerated."

CHAPTER XLIV.

GLOBY.

"What Alexander sighed for,
What Cesar's soul possessed,
What heroes said he died for,
Glory!"

Within three days after this settlement with Black Donald, Colonel Le Noir left home to join his regiment, ordered to Mexico.

He was accompanied by his son, Craven Le Noir, as far as Baltimore, from which point the reinforcements were to sail for New Orleans, en route for the seat of war.

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's tride with you!"
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it will be very well
stant land, serving your
your brother's heiress,
ally hold, is got out of

that," mused Le Noir,
Donald!"
—I ought to have been
to be too. But Colonel,
my part of the engene-
er of accidents, that you
e with me before you

over to me the remain-
on first," passionately

on case you'd have to
myself; or see old Hur-
your fortune."

don't let's quarrel.
ed against itself can-
e time by falling out.
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IV.

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about to weigh anchor, Craven Le Noir took leave
of his father and set out for the Hidden House.

And here Colonel Le Noir's regiment was joined
by the company of new recruits, in which Her-
bert Greyson held a commission as lieutenant,
and thus the young man's worst forebodings were
realized in having for a travelling companion and
superior officer, a man of whom he had been
destined to make a mortal enemy, Col. Le Noir.
However, Herbert soon marked out his course of
conduct, which was to avoid Le Noir as much as
was consistent with his own official duty, and
when compelled to meet him, to deport himself
with the cold ceremony of a subordinate to a su-
perior officer.

Le Noir, on his part, treated Herbert with an
arrogant scorn amounting to insult, and used
every opportunity afforded him by his position to
wound and humiliate the young lieutenant.

After a quick and prosperous voyage they
reached New Orleans, where they expected to be
further reinforced by a company of volunteers
who had come down the Mississippi river from
St. Louis. These volunteers were now being
daily drilled at their quarters in the city, and
were only awaiting the arrival of the vessel to be
enrolled in the regiment.

One morning, a few days after the ship reached
harbor, Herbert Greyson went on shore to the
military rendezvous to see the new recruits exer-
cised. While he stood within the enclosure
watching their evolutions under the orders of an
officer, his attention became concentrated upon
the form of a young man of the rank and file,
who was marching in a line with many others,
having their backs turned towards him. That
form and gait seemed familiar—under the cir-
cumstances in which he saw them again—pain-
fully familiar. And yet he could not identify the
man. While he gazed, the recruits, at the
word of command, suddenly wheeled and faced
about. And Herbert could scarcely repress an
exclamation of astonishment and regret.

That young man in the dress of a private sol-
dier was Clara Day's betrothed, the widow's only
son, Traverse Rockel. While Herbert continued
to gaze in surprise and grief, the young recruit
raised his eyes, recognized his friend, flushed up
to his very temples, and cast his eyes down again.
The rapid evolutions soon wheeled them around,
and the next order sent them into their quarters.

Herbert's time was also up, and he returned to
his duty.

The next day Herbert went to the quarters of
the new recruits, and sought out the young friend,
whom he found loitering about the grounds.
Again Traverse blushed deeply as the young lieut-
enant approached. But Herbert Greyson, letting
none of his regret appear, since now it would be
worse than useless, in only serving to give pain to
the young private, went up to him cordially and
shook his hands, saying:

"Going to serve your country, eh, Traverse?"

Well, I am heartily glad to see you, at any rate."

"But heartily sorry to see me here, enlisted as
a private in a company of raw recruits, looking
not unlike Falstaff's ragged regiment!"

"Nay, I did, as you say, *that*, Traverse. Many a
private in the ranks has 'tween to be a general
officer," replied Herbert, encouragingly.

Traverse laughed good-humoredly, saying:

"It does not look much like it in my case.
This dress," he said, looking down at his coarse,
ill-fitting uniform, cow hide shoes, etc.—"this
dress, this drilling, these close quarters, coarse
food, and mixed company, is enough to take the
military ardour out of anyone."

"Traverse, you talk like a dandy, which is not
at all your character. Effeminacy is not your
vice."

"Nor any other species of weakness, do you
mean? Ah, Herbert, you are saying, hoping, but
confident old friend is considerably taken down
in his ideas of himself, his success, and life in
general. I went to the West with high hopes.
Six months of struggling against indifference,
neglect, and accumulating debts, lowered them
down. I carried out letters and made friends,
but their friendship began and ended in wish-
ing me well. While trying to get into profitable
practice I got into debt. Meanwhile I could
not hear from my betrothed in all those months.
An occasional letter from her might have pre-
vented this step. But troubles gathered around
me, debts increased, and—"

"Creditors were cruel. It is the old story,
poor boy!"

"No; my only creditors were my landlady and
landladies, two poor widows who never willingly
distressed me, but occasionally asked for 'that
little amount' so piteously, that my heart bled to
lack it to give them. And as victuals and clean
clothes were absolute necessities of life, every week
my debts increased. I could have faced a pros-
perous male creditor, and might, perhaps, have
been provoked to bully such an one, had he been
inclined to be cruel; but I could not face poor
women, who after all, I believe, are generally the
best friends a struggling young man can have;
and so, not to bore a smart young lieutenant
with a poor private's antecedents—"

"Oh, Traverse—"

"—I will even make an end of my story. 'At
last there came a weary day when hope and faith
beneath the weight gave way.' And hearing that
a company of volunteers was being raised to go to
Mexico, I enlisted, and my citizen's wardrobe and
my little medical library, paid my debts, made my
two friends, the poor widows, some acceptable
presents, sent the small remnant of the money to
my mother, telling her that I was going farther
south to try my fortune, and—here I am!"

"You did not tell her that you had enlisted?"

"No."

"Oh, Traverse! how long ago was it that you
left St. Louis?"

"Just two weeks."

"Ah! if you had only had patience for a few days
longer! I burst unaware from Herbert's bosom.
In an instant he was sorry for having spoken
thus, for Traverse, with all his soul in his eyes,
asked eagerly:

"Why—why, Herbert? What do you mean?"

"Why you should know that I did not come
direct from West point, but from the neighbor-
hood of Stanton and Hurricane Hall."

"Did you? Oh, did you? Then you may be
able to give the news of Clara and my dear mother!"
exclaimed Traverse, eagerly.

"Yes, I am—pleasant news," said Herbert,
hesitating in a manner in which no one ever hesi-
tated before in communicating good tidings.

"Thank Heaven I do, thank Heaven! What
is it, Herbert? How is my dear mother getting
on? Where is my best Clara?"

"They are both living together at Willow
Hights, according to the wishes of the late
Doctor Day. A second appeal to the Orphan's
Court, made in behalf of Clara by her next friend
Doctor Williams, about a month ago, proved more
successful. And if you had waited a few days
longer before enlisting and leaving St. Louis you
would have received a letter from Clara to the
same effect, and one from Doctor Williams, ap-
prizing you that your mother had received her
legacy, and that the thousand dollars left you by
Doctor Day had been paid into the Agricultural
Bank, subject to your orders."

"Oh, Heaven! had I but waited three days
longer!" exclaimed Traverse, in such acute dis-
tress that Herbert hastened to console him by
saying:

"Do not repine Traverse. These things go by
fast. It is your destiny—let us hope it will
prove a glorious one."

"It was my IMPATIENCE!" exclaimed Traverse.
"It was my IMPATIENCE! Doctor Day always
faithfully warned me against it—always told me
that most of the errors, sin and miseries of this
world arose from impetuous impatience, which is
want of faith. And now I know it! and now I
know it! What had I, who had an honorable
profession, to do with becoming a private sol-
dier?"

"Well, well, it is honorable at least to serve
your country," said Herbert soothingly.

"If a foreign foe invaded our shores, yes; but
what had I to do with invading another's country?
—enlisting for a war of the rights and wrongs of
which I know no more than anybody else does!
Growing impatient because fortune did not at once
empty her cornucopia upon my head! Oh, fool!"

"You name yourself too severely, Traverse.
Your act was natural enough and justifiable
enough, much as it is to be regretted," said Her-
bert, cheerfully.

"Come, come, sit on this plank bench beside
me—if you are not ashamed to be seen with a pri-
vate who is also a donkey—and tell me all about
it. Show me the full measure of the happiness I

have so recklessly squandered away," exclaimed
Traverse, desperately.

"I will sit beside you and tell you everything
you wish to know,—on condition that you stop
boasting yourself in a manner that fills me with
indignation," replied Herbert, as they went to a
distant part of the dusty enclosure and took their
seats upon a rude bench.

"Oh, Herbert bear with me; I could dash my
will, impatient head against a stone wall!"

"That would not belike to clear or strengthen
your brains," said Herbert, who thereupon com-
menced and told Traverse the whole history of the
persecution of Clara Day at the Hidden House;
the interception of her letters; the attempt made
to force her into a marriage with Craven Le Noir;
her deliverance from her enemies by the address
and courage of Capitola; her flight to Stanton
and refuge with Mrs. Rocks; her appeal to the
court; and finally her success and her settlement
under the charge of her manly friend at Willow
Hights."

Traverse had not listened patiently to this ac-
count. He heard it with many bursts of irre-
pressible indignation and many involuntary starts
of wild passion. Towards the last he sprang up
and walked up and down, chafing like an angry
lion in his cage.

"And this man," he exclaimed, as Herbert con-
cluded,—"*This* demon—this beast—is now com-
manding officer of the colonel of our regiment!"

"Yes," replied Herbert, "but as such you must
not call him names; military rules are despotic;
and this man who knows your person and knows
you to be the betrothed of Clara Day, whose land
and fortune he covets for his son, will leave no
power, with which his command invests him, un-
tried, to ruin and destroy you! Traverse, I say
those things to you, that being 'forewarned,' you
may be 'fore armed.' I trust that you will re-
member your mother and your betrothed, and for
their dear sakes practice every sort of self-control,
patience and forbearance under the provocations
you may receive from our colonel. And in advising
you to do this, I only counsel that which I shall
myself practice. I, too, am under the ban of Le
Noir for the part I played in the church in suc-
ceeding Capitola, as well as for happening to be the
nephew of my uncle, Major Warfield, who is his
mortal enemy."

"It—will I not be patient, after the lesson I
have just learned upon the evils of its opposite? Be
easy on my account, dear, old friend, I will be
as patient as Job, meek as Moses, and long suf-
fering as—my own sweet mother!" said Traverse,
earnestly.

The drum was now heard beating to quarters,
and Traverse, wringing his friend's hand, left him.

Herbert returned to his shift full of one scheme,
of which he had not spoken to Traverse lest it
should prove unsuccessful. This scheme was to
procure his free discharge before they should set
out for the Rio Grande. He had many influ-
ential friends among the officers of his regiment,
and he was resolved to tell them as much as was
delicate, proper and useful for them to know of
the young recruit's private history in order to get
their co-operation.

Herbert spent every hour of this day and the
next, when off duty, in this service of his friend.
He found his brother-officers easily interested,
sympathetic and propitious. They united their
efforts with his own to procure the discharge of
the young recruit; but in vain! the power of
Colonel Le Noir was opposed to their influence,
and the application was peremptorily refused.

Herbert Greyson did not sit down quietly under
this disappointment, but wrote an application,
embodying all the facts of the case to the Sec-
retary of War, got it signed by all the officers of
the regiment and dispatched it by the first mail.

Simultaneously he took another important step
for the interest of his friend. Without hinting
any particular motive he had begged Traverse to
let him have his photograph taken, and the latter,
with a laugh, at the lover-like proposal, had con-
sented. When the likeness was finished, Herbert
sent it by express to Major Warfield, accompan-
ied by a letter describing the excellent character
and unfortunate condition of Traverse, praying
the Major's interest in his behalf, and concluded
by saying:

"You cannot look upon the accompanying
photograph of my friend and any longer disclaim
your own express image in your son."

How this affected the action of Old Hurricane will be seen hereafter.

Traverse knowing nothing of the efforts that had been, and were still being made for his discharge, suffered neither disappointment for failure of the first, nor anxiety for the issue of the last. He wrote to his mother and Clara, congratulating them on their good fortune; telling them that he, in common with many young men of St. Louis, had volunteered for the Mexican War, that he was then at New Orleans, on route for the Rio Grande, and that they would be pleased to know that their maternal friend, Herbert Greyson was an officer in the same regiment of which he himself was at present a private, but with strong hopes of soon winning his captaincy. He endorsed an order for his mother to draw the thousand dollars left him by Doctor Day; and he advised her to deposit the sum in her own name, for her own use in case of need. Praying God's blessing upon them all, and begging their prayers for himself, Traverse concluded his letter, which he mailed the same evening.

And the next morning the company was ordered on board, and the whole expedition set sail for Rio Grande.

Now we might just as easily as not accompany our troops to Mexico and relate the feats of arms there performed, with the minutest and fidelity of an eye-witness, since we have sat at dinner tables where the heroes of that war have honored guests, and where we have heard them fight their battles over till "thrice the foe was slain, and thrice the field was won."

We might follow the rising star of our young Lieutenant, as by his own merits and others' misdeeds he ascended from rank to rank, through all the grades of military promotion, but we need not, because the feats of Lieutenant—Captain—Major and Colonel Greyson, are they not written in the chronicles of the Mexican War?

What prior to look after our little domestic hero, our brave little Cap., who, when women have their rights, shall be a lieutenant-colonel herself. Shall she not, gentlemen?

In one fortnight from this time, while Mrs. Rooke and Clara were still living comfortably at Willow Heights, and waiting anxiously to hear from Traverse, whom they still supposed to be at his last letter written on the eve of his departure for the seat of war. At first the news overwhelmed them with grief, but then they sought relief in faith, answered his letter cheerfully, and commended him to the infinite mercy of God.

CHAPTER XLV.

CAP. CAPTIVATES A CRAVEN.

"He knew himself a villain, but he deemed The rest no better than the thing he seemed; And scorned the best as hypocrites who hid He knew himself detested, but he knew The hearts that loathed him crouched and—dreaded too."

The unregenerate human heart is perhaps the most dangerous thing in all nature; and in nothing is it more dangerous than in the manifestations of its passions; and in no passion is it so fantastic as in that which it miscalls love—but which is really often only appetite.

From the earliest days of manhood Craven Le Noir had been the votary of vice, which he called pleasure. Before reaching the age of twenty-five he had run the full course of dissipation, and found himself ruined in health, degraded in character, and disgusted with life.

Yet in all this experience his heart had not been once agitated with a single emotion that deserved the name of passion. It was colder than the coldest.

He had not loved Clara; though, for the sake of her money, he had courted her so assiduously. Indeed, for the doctor's orphan girl, he had, from spirit, conceived a strong antipathy. His will loathing a fund might feel for an angel. He had found it repugnant and difficult, almost to the extent of impossibility, for him to pursue the courtship to which he was only reconciled by a sense of duty to—his pocket.

It was reserved for his meeting with Capitola, at the altar of the Forest Chapel to fire his claim, my heart, stagnant blood, and eatel some, with Her image, as she stood there at the altar with flashing eyes, and flaming cheeks, and scathing tongue, defying him, was ever before his mind's eye. There was something about the girl's mind, so pleasant and original, that she impressed even his sense to do. But what, most of all, attracted him that little savage to his bosom and have her at his mercy. The aversion she had exhibited towards him only stimulated his passion.

Craven Le Noir, among his other graces, was gifted with inordinate vanity. He did not in the least degree despair of overcoming all Capitola's passion equal his own.

He knew well that he dared not present himself at Hurricane Hall, but he resolved to waylay her in her rides, and there to press his suit. To this he was urged by another motive almost as strong as love—namely, avarice.

He had gathered thus much from his father—that Capitola Black was supposed to be Capitola Le Noir, the rightful heiress of all that vast property in land, houses, iron and coal mines, foundries and furnaces, railway shares, &c., and bank stocks, from which his father drew his princely revenue that supported them both in their lavish extravagance of living.

As the heiress, or rather the rightful owner, of all this vast fortune, Capitola was a much greater "catch" than poor Clara with her modest estate had been. And Mr. Craven Le Noir was quite willing to turn the tables on his father by running off with the great heiress, and step from this No. 1 position of dependent upon Colonel Le Noir's ungracious bounty to that of the property. Added to that was another favorable circumstance, namely, whereas he had had a strong personal antipathy to Clara, which would make his course of courtship all the pleasanter, with, or forcibly abduct, Capitola Le Noir, marry her, and then turn upon his father and claim the fortune in right of his wife. The absence of Colonel Le Noir in Mexico favored his projects, as he could not fear interruption.

Meanwhile our little madcap remained quite unconscious of the honors designed her. She had absence; every alternate day of the first week of Herbert's absence; every alternate day of the second; twice in the third; once in the fourth; not at all in the fifth, and the sixth week she was quite herself again, as full of fun and frolic as ready for any mischief or devilry that might turn up.

She resumed her rides, no longer followed by Wool, whom Old Hurricane, partly upon account of his misadventure in having had the misfortune inadvertently "to lose sight of" his mistress upon that memorable occasion of the melioration of Cap. into Clara, and partly because he did not consider his favorite in danger.

He little knew what a subtle and unscrupulous agent had been left sworn to her destruction, and that another individual, almost equally dangerous, had registered a secret vow to run off with her.

Neither did poor Cap., when rejoicing to be free from the dogging attendance of Wool, imagine the peril to which she was exposed, nor is it even likely that if she had she would have missing piquant adventures. From childhood she had been inured to danger, and had never suffered harm; therefore Cap., like the Chevalier Bayard, was "without fear and without reproach."

Craven Le Noir proceeded cautiously with his plans, knowing that there was time enough, and that all might be lost by haste. He did not wish to alarm Capitola.

The first time he took occasion to meet her in the folds of his saddle, and with a melancholy smile passed on.

"Miserable wretch, he is a mean fellow to want to marry a girl against her will, no matter how

much he might have been in love with her; and I am very glad I balked him! He looks so ill and unhappy that—I can't help pitying him!" said Cap., looking compassionately at the white cheeks and languishing eyes, and little knowing that the illness was the effect of dissipation, and that the melancholy was assumed for the occasion.

A few days after this Cap. again met Craven Le Noir, who again, with a deep bow and sad smile, passed her.

"Poor fellow! he richly deserves to suffer, and I hope it may make him better, for I am right down sorry for him; it must be so dreadful to lose one we love! but it was too base in him to let his father try to compel her to have him! Suppose, now, Herbert Greyson was to take a fancy to another girl, would I let uncle go to him and put a pistol to his head, and say, 'Cap. is fond of you, you varlet! and demmy, sir! you shall marry none but her, or receive an ounce of lead in your stupid brains!' No, I'd save it! I'd forward the other wedding! I'd make the cake and dress the bride, and—uncle, I'd break—no, I'm blamed if I would! I'd not break my heart for anybody! Set them up, with it, indeed! I'd not worry my dear, darling, sweet, precious Herbert treat me so! And I'm a wretch to think of it!" said Cap., with a rich, immitable unctious, as rejoicing in her own happy love, she cheered Gyp and rode on.

Now Craven Le Noir had been conscious of the reluctant and compassionate look of Capitola, but he did not know that they were only the pitying regards of a weak and victorious nature over a vanquished and suffering wrong-doer. However, he still determined to be cautious, and not ruin his prospects by precipitate action, but to "hasten slowly."

So the next time he met Capitola he raised his eyes with one deep, and, appealing gaze to hers, and then bowing profoundly, passed on. "Poor man!" said Cap., to herself, "he bears no malice towards me for depriving him of his sweetheart, that's certain! And badly as he behaved, I suppose it was all for love, for I don't know how any one could live in the same house with Clara and not be in love with her. I should have been so myself, if I'd been a man, I know!"

The next time Cap. met Craven, and saw again that deep, sorrowful, appealing gaze, as he bowed and passed her; she glanced after him, saying to herself:

"Poor soul, I wonder what he means by looking at me in that piteous manner?—I can do nothing to relieve him. I'm sure if I could, I would. But the way of a transgressor is hard," Mr. Le Noir, who she sins must suffer!

For about three weeks the seemingly accidental meetings continued in this silent manner, so slowly did Craven make his advances. Then, feeling more confidence, he made a considerably long step forward.

One day, when he guessed that Capitola would be out, instead of meeting her as heretofore, he put himself in her road, and riding slowly toward a five-barred gate, allowed her to overtake him.

He opened the gate, and bowing, held it open until she passed.

She bowed her thanks and rode on; but presently, without the least appearance of intruding aside—and speaking with downcast eyes and deferential manner, he said:

"I have long desired an opportunity to express to you how much I am indebted to you, for having been hurried into rudeness towards an estimable young lady at the Forest Chapel. Miss Black, will you permit me now to assure you of my profound repentance of that act, and to implore your pardon."

"Oh, I have nothing against you, Mr. Le Noir! It was not I whom you were intending to marry against my will! and as for what you said and did to me, ha-ha! I had provoked it, you know, and I also afterwards paid it in kind; you know, fair fight, in which I was victor; and victors are seldom ever vindictive!" said Cap., laughing, unjust, also did not suspect him of being treacherous and deceitful, or imagine the base designs concealed beneath his plausible manner. Her

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Cap. again met Craven
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said Cap., with a rich,
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brave, honest nature could understand a traitor
and a despot, but not a traitor.

"Then like frank enemies who have fought
their fight out, let us hear no more toward each
other, we may shake hands and be friends, I
hope!" said Craven, replying in the same spirit
in which she had spoken.

"Well, I don't know about that, Mr. Le Noir!
Friendship is a very sacred thing, and its name
should not be lightly taken on our tongues. I
hope you will excuse me if I decline your pro-
fer," said Cap.—who had a well of deep, true,
earnest feeling beneath her effervescent surface.

"What! you will not even grant a repentant
man your friendship, Miss Black?" asked Craven,
with a sorrowful smile.

"I wish you well, Mr. Le Noir. I wish you a
good and therefore a happy life; but I cannot give
you friendship, for that means a great deal."
"Oh, I see how it is! You cannot give your
friendship where you cannot give your esteem.
Is it not so?"

"Yes," said Capito, "that is it; yet I wish
you so well that I wish you might grow worthy of
higher esteem than mine."

"You are a man of my—yes, I will not
shrink from characterizing that conduct as it de-
serves—a unpardonable violence towards Clara.
Miss Black, I have mourned that sin from the day
that I was hurried into it until this. I have be-
wailed it from the very bottom of my heart," said
Craven, earnestly fixing his eyes with an ex-
pression of perfect truthfulness upon those of
Capito.

"I am glad to hear you say so," said Cap.
"Miss Black, please to hear this in palliation—
I will not presume to say in defence of my con-
duct; I was driven to frenzy by a passion of
contending love and jealousy, as violent and mad-
dening as was mine and transient. But that the
delusive passion has subsided, and among the
unnumbered mercies for which I have to be thank-
ful is that, in my frantic pursuit of Clara Day, I
was not cursed with success. For all the violence
into which that frenzy drove me I have
deeply repented. I can never forgive myself, but
—I cannot you forgive me?"

"Mr. Le Noir, I have nothing for which to for-
give you. I am glad that you have repented to-
wards Clara, and I wish you well, and that is
really all that I can say."

"I have deserved this, and I accept it," said
Craven, in a tone so mournful that Capito, in
spite of all her instincts, could not choose but pity
him.

He rode on, with his pale face, downcast eyes,
and melancholy expression, until they reached a
point at the back of Hurricane Hall where their
paths diverged.

Here Craven, lifting his hat and bowing pro-
foundly, said, in a sad tone.
"Good evening Miss Black!"

And turning his horse's head, took the path
leading down to the Hidden Hollow.

"Poor young fellow! he must be very unhappy
down in that miserable place! but I can't help it!
I wish he would go to Mexico with the rest," said
Cap., as she pursued her way homeward.

Not to excite the suspicion of Craven, Le Noir
avoided meeting Capito for a few days, and then
threw himself in her road, and as before, allowed
her to overtake him.

Very subtly he entered into conversation with
her, and guarding every word and look, took care
to interest without alarming her. He said no
more of friendship, but a great deal of regret for
wasted years and wasted talents in the past, and
good resolutions for the future.

And Cap. listened good humoredly. Capito, of
being of a brave, hard, firm nature, had not the
sensitive perceptions, fine intuitions, and true in-
sight into character that distinguished the more
refined nature of Clara Day; nor at least, she had
not those delicate faculties in the same perfection.

Thus her undoubted suspicions of Craven's sa-
cerity were overborne by a sort of benevolence
which determined her to think the best of him
which circumstances would permit.

Craven, on his part, having had more experi-
ence, was much wiser in the pursuit of his ob-
ject; he had also the advantage of being in earnest;
his passion for Capito was sincere, and not
as it had been in the case of Clara, simulated; he
believed, therefore, that when the time should be
ripe for the declaration of his love, he would have

a much better prospect of success—especially as
Capito, in her ignorance of her own great for-
tune, must consider his proposal the very climax
of disinterestedness.

After three more weeks of riding and conver-
sation with Capito, he had, in his own estimation,
advanced so far in her good opinion as to make
it perfectly safe to risk a declaration. And this
he determined to do upon the very first oppor-
tunity.

Chance favoured him.
One afternoon Capito, riding through the
pleasant woods skirting the back of the mountain
range that sheltered Hurricane Hall, got a fall,
for which she was afterwards inclined well to suf-
fer.

It happened in this way she had come to a
steep rise in the ground, and urged her pony into
a head gallop, intending as she said to herself,
"store the height," when suddenly, under the
violent strain, the girth, ill-fated, flew apart,
and Miss Cap. was on the ground, buried under
the fallen saddle.

With many a blessing upon the careless, she
of the groom, Cap. picked herself up, put her
saddle on the horse, and was engaged by dis-
tending the stirrups, when Craven, Le Noir, and
the violent strain, the girth, ill-fated, flew apart,
and Miss Cap. was on the ground, buried under
the fallen saddle.

"What is the matter?—No serious accident! I
hope and trust, Miss Black?"

Those wretches in those stables did
not half know their duty, and I was going to
a hard gallop up the steep, it flew apart and
gave me a tumble, that's all!" said Cap., de-
voting a moment from her occupation to take
breath.

"You were not hurt?" inquired Craven, with
deep interest in his tone.

"Oh, no, there was no harm done except to
my riding skirt, which has been torn and mud-
died by the fall," said Cap., laughing, and resum-
ing her efforts to tighten the girth.

"Pray permit me," said Craven, gently taking
the end of the strap from her hand; "this is no
work for a lady, and is besides beyond your
strength."

Capito, thanking him withdrew to the side
of the road, and seating herself upon the trunk
of a fallen tree, began to brush the dirt from her
habit.

Craven adjusted and secured the saddle with
great care, patted and soothed the pony, and then
approaching Capito in the most desolent
manner, stood before her and said.

"Miss Black, you will pardon me, I hope if I
tell you that the peril I had imagined you to be
in, has so agitated my mind as to make it impos-
sible for me longer to withhold a declaration of
my sentiments"—here his voice that had trem-
bled throughout this discourse now really and
utterly failed him.

Capito looked up with surprise and interest,
she had never in her life before heard an ex-
plicit declaration of love from anybody. She
and Herbert somehow, had always understood
each other very well without ever a word of
testimony love making passing between them; so
Capito did not exactly know what was coming
next.

Craven recovered his voice; and encouraged
by the favorable manner in which she appeared
to listen to him, actually threw himself at her
feet and seizing one of her hands, with much
ardour and earnestness and much more eloquence
than he would have credited him with, poured
forth the history of his passion and his
hopes.

"Well, I declare!" said Cap., when he had
finished his speech and was waiting in breath-
less impatience for her answer, "this is what is
called a declaration of love, and a proposal for
marriage, is it?—It is downright sentimental, I
suppose, if I had only the sense to appreciate it!"

"Crue! gir! how you mock me!" cried
Craven, rising from his knees and sitting beside
her.

"No, I don't! I'm in solemn earnest! I say
it is first rate! I do it again! I like it!"
"Sentimental and mercenary one, you glory in the
name! But if you wish again to hurt
me say I love you, I will say it a dozen—yes a
hundred times over, if you will only admit that
you could love me a little in return!"

"Don't! that would be tiresome! two or three
times is quite enough! Besides, what earthly
good could my saying 'I love you' do?"

"I might persuade you to become the wife of
one who would adore you to the last hour of his
life!"

"Meaning you?"
"Meaning me, the most devoted of your ad-
mirers!"

"That isn't saying much, since I haven't got
any but you!"

"Thank fortune for it! Then I am to under-
stand, charming Capito, that at least your
hand and your affections are free," said Craven,
joyfully.

"Well, now, I don't know about that. Really,
I can't positively say! but it strikes me, if I
were to get married to anybody else, there's
somebody would feel queerish!"

"No doubt there are many whose secret
hopes would be blasted, for no charming girl
could not have passed through this world with-
out having won many hearts, who would keenly
feel the loss of hope in her marriage! But
what if they do, my enchanting Capito? You
are not responsible for any one having found
such hopes!"

"Fudge!" said Cap. "I'm no belle! never
was! I never can be! I have neither wealth, beauty,
nor coquetry enough to make me one! I've no
lovers or admirers to break their hearts about me,
one way or another; but there is one honest fel-
low—him I never mind, I feel as if I belonged to
somebody else! That's all. I am very much
obliged to you, Mr. Le Noir, for your preference,
and even for the beautiful way in which you ex-
pressed it, but—I belong to somebody else."

"Miss Black," said Craven, somewhat abashed
but not discouraged, "I think I understand
you! I presume that you refer to the young
man who was your gallant champion in the
Forest Chapel."

"The one that made your nose bleed!" said
the incorrigible Cap.

"Well, Miss Black, from your words it appears
that this is by no means an acknowledged, but
only an understood engagement, which cannot be
binding upon either party! Now a young lady of
your acknowledged good sense and refinement,
I never had any more good sense than I have
had anywhere," interrupted Cap.

Craven smiled.
"I would not bear your enemy say that," he
replied, then resuming his argument he said:

"You will really understand, Miss Black, that
the engagement of which you speak, where
there is want of fortune on both sides, is more
prudent, than it is binding. On the contrary, the
position which it is my pride to offer you, is con-
sidered an enviable one, even apart from the
devoted love that goes with it. You are aware
that I am the sole heir of the Hidden House
estate, which with all its dependencies is consid-
ered the largest proprietary, as my wife would be
the most important lady in the county."

Cap's lip curled a little; looking askance at
him, she answered—
"I really am very much obliged to you, Mr.
Le Noir, for the distinguished honor that you de-
signed for me. I should highly appreciate the
magnanimity of a young gentleman like her of
the wealthiest estate in the neighborhood, who
deigns to propose marriage to the little beggar
that I acknowledge myself to be. I regret to be
obliged to refuse such dignities, but—I belong to
another!" said Capito, rising and advancing
towards her horse.

Craven would not risk his success by pushing
his suit farther at this sitting.
Very respectfully lending his assistance to put
Capito into her saddle, he said he hoped at some
future, and more propitious time, to resume the
subject. And then with a deep bow he left her,
mounted his horse and rode on his way.

He did not believe that Capito was more than
half in earnest, or that any girl in Capito's cir-
cumstances would do such a mad thing as to re-
fuse the position he offered her.

He did not throw himself in her way often
enough to excite her suspicion that their meetings
were overruled on his part, and even when he
did overtake her or when she came to overtake him,
he avoided giving her offence by pressing his suit
until another good opportunity should offer.
This was not long in coming.

One afternoon he overtook her and rode by her side for a short distance when finding her in unusually good spirits and temper, he again renewed his declaration of love and offer of marriage.

Cap. turned around in her saddle and looked at him with astonishment for a full minute before she exclaimed:

"Why, Mr. Le Noir, I gave you an answer more than a week ago. Didn't I tell you 'no'?"

What on earth do you mean by repeating the question?"

"I mean, bewitching Capitola, not to let such a treasure slip out of my grasp if I can help it?"

"I never was in your grasp that I knew of!" said Cap., whipping up her horse and leaving him far behind.

Days passed before Craven thought it prudent again to renew and press his suit. He did so upon a fine September morning, when he overtook her, and in the most deprecating manner besought her to listen to him once more. Then he commenced in a strain of the most impassioned eloquence and urged his love and his proposal.

Capitola stopped her horse, wheeled around and faced him, looking him full in the eyes, while she said:

"Upon my word, Mr. Le Noir, you remind me of an anecdote told of young Sheridan. When his father advised him to take a wife and settle, he replied by saying *these* wife he should take! Will nobody serve your purpose, but somebody else's sweetheart?—I have told you that I belong to a brave young soldier who is fighting his country's battles in a foreign land, while you are lazing here at home, trying to undermine him! I am ashamed of you, sir! and ashamed of myself for presuming to accost me on the highway, or anywhere else, again! Craven by name and Craven by nature, you have once already felt the weight of Horbert's arm! I do not provoke its second descent upon you! You are warned!"

and with that Capitola, with her lips curled, her eyes flashing and her cheeks burning, put whip to her pony and galloped away.

Craven Le Noir's thin, white face grew perfectly livid with passion.

"I will have her yet! I have sworn it, and by fair means or by foul, I will have her yet!" he exclaimed as he relaxed his hold upon his bridle and let his horse go on slowly, while he sat with his brows gathered over his thin nose, his long chin buried in his neck-cloth, and his nails between his teeth, gnawing like a wild beast, as was his custom when deeply cogitating.

Presently he conceived a plan so diabolical that none but Satan himself could have inspired it! This was to take advantage of his acquaintance and casual meetings with Capitola, so to malign her character, as to make it unlikely that any honest man would ever risk his honor by taking her to wife; that thus the way might be left clear for himself; and he resolved if possible to effect this in such a manner—namely, by jests, and sneers, that it should never be directly traced to a positive assertion on his part. And in the meantime he determined so as to govern himself in his deportment towards Capitola as to arouse no suspicion, give no offence and if possible win back her confidence.

It is true that even Craven Le Noir, base as he was, shrunk from the idea of smirching the reputation of the woman of whom he wished to make a wife; but then he said to himself that in that remote neighborhood the scandal would be of little consequence to him, who as soon as he should be married, would claim the estate of the Hidden House in right of his wife, put it in charge of an overseer, and then with his bride start for Paris, the paradise of the epicurean, where he designed to fix their principal residence.

Craven Le Noir was so pleased with his plan that he immediately set about putting it in execution. Our next chapter will show how he succeeded.

CHAPTER XLVI.

CAP. S. MAGE.

Is he not approved to the height of a villain, who has slandered, scorned, dishonored thy sinewoman! Oh! that I were a man for his sake, or had a friend who would be one for mine!

—SHAKESPEARE.

Autumn brought the usual city visitors to shoot over Major's Warfield's grounds. Old Hurricane was in his glory, giving dinners and projecting hunts.

Capitola also enjoyed herself rarely, enacting new role of hostess, and not unfrequently joining her uncle and his friends in their field sports.

Among the guests there were two who deserve particular attention, not only because they had been for many years annual visitors of Hurricane Hall, but more especially because, there had grown up between them and our little madcap heroine a strong mutual confidence and friendship. Yet no persons could possibly be more unlike than Capitola and the two cousins of her soul, as she called these two friends. They were both distant relatives of Major Warfield, and in right of this relationship invariably addressed Capitola as "Cousin Cap."

John Stone, the elder of the two, was a very tall, stout, squarely-built young man, with a broad, good-humored face, fair skin, blue eyes, and light hair. In temperament he was rather phlegmatic, quiet and lax. In character he was honest, prudent and good-natured. In circumstances he was a safe banker, with a noble wife and two healthy children. The one thing that was able to excite his quiet nerves was the *idea*, of which he was as fond as he could possibly be of any amusement. The one person who agreeably stirred his rather still spirits was our little Cap., and that was the secret of his friendship for her.

Edwin Percy, the other, was a young West Indian, tall and delicately formed, with a clear olive complexion, languishing, dark-hazel eyes, and dark bright-chestnut hair and beard. In temperament he was as ardent as his elfin character, indolent, careless and self-indulgent. In condition he was the bachelor heir of a sugar plantation of a thousand acres. He loved not the chase, nor any other amusement requiring exertion. He doted upon swan-down sofas with springs, French plays, cigars and chocolate. He was the country to find repose, good air, and an appetite. He was the victim of constitutional ennui that yielded to nothing but the exhilaration of Capitola's company; that was the mystery of his love for her, and doubtless the young Creole would have proposed for Cap. had he not thought it too much trouble to get married, and dreaded the bustle of a bride. Certainly Edwin Percy was as opposite in character to John Stone as they both were to Capitola, yet great was the relative attraction among the three. Cap. impartially divided her kind offices as hostess between them.

John Stone joined Old Hurricane in many a hard day's hunt, and Capitola was often of the party.

Edwin Percy spent many hours on the luxurious lounge in the parlor, where Cap. was careful to place a stand with chocolate, cigar matches and his favorite books.

One day Cap. had had what she called "a row with the governor," that is to say, a slight misunderstanding with Major Warfield; a very uncommon occurrence, as the reader knows, in which that temperate old gentleman had so freely bestowed upon his niece the names of "beggar, foundling, brat, vagabond and vagrant," that Capitola, in just indignation, refused to join the birding party, and taking her game-bag, powder, flask, shot-horn and fowling-piece, and calling her favorite pointer, walked off as she termed it, "to shoot herself." But if Capitola's by no means sweet temper had been tried that morning, it was destined to be still more severely tested before the day was over.

Her second provocation came in this way: John Stone, another deserter of the birding party, that day betaken himself to Tip-Top upon some private business of his own. He dined at the "Antlers" in company with some sporting gentlemen of the neighborhood, and when the conver-

sation naturally turned upon field sports Mr. John Stone spoke of the fine shooting that was to be had around Hurricane Hall, when one of the gentlemen, looking straight across the table to Mr. Stone, said:

"Ahem! that pretty little hummock of Hurricane Hall—that niece, or ward, or mysterious daughter of old Hurricane, who engages with so much enthusiasm in your field sports over there, stand!—a Diana in nothing but her love of the chase!"

"Sir! it is a base calumny! and the man who endorses it is a shameless slanderer! There is no such person as Hurricane Hall! I may be found at my present residence in his pastboard across the table, and rising to leave it."

"Nay, nay," said the stranger, laughing and pushing the card away. "I do not endorse the statement; I know nothing about it. I wash my hands of it," said the young man. And then upon Mr. Stone's demanding the author of the calumny, he gave the name of Mr. Craven Le Noir, who he said, had "talked in his cups," at a dinner party recently given by one of his friends.

"I pronounce—publicly in the presence of all these witnesses, as I shall presently to Craven Le Noir himself—that he is a shameless slanderer, but who has basely slandered a noble girl! You, forth decline to endorse those words; hence shall call to a severe account any man who ventures, by word, gesture or glance, to hint this slander, or in any other way deal lightly with the honorable name and fame of the lady in question. I am to be found at Hurricane Hall, proving myself of conversation, and—a very good afternoon," said John Stone, bowing and leaving the room.

He immediately called for his horse and rode home.

In crossing the thicket of woods between the river and the rising ground in front of Hurricane Hall, he overtook Capitola, who, as we have said, had been out alone with her gun and dog, and was now returning home with her game-bag well laden.

Now, as John Stone looked at Capitola, with her reckless, free and joyous air, he thought she was just the sort of a girl unconsciously, to get herself and friends into trouble. And he thought it best to give her a hint to put an abrupt period to her acquaintance with the Halls, and with the help of his own hand, he did so.

While still hesitating how to begin the conversation, he came up with the young girl dismounted, and leading his horse, walked by her side asking carelessly:

"What have you bagged, Cap.?"

"Some partridges. Oh, you should have been out with me and Sweetie! we've had such sport! but, anyhow, you shall enjoy your share of the spoils! Come home, and you shall have some of these partridges broiled for supper, with currant sauce—a dish of my own invention, for uncle's sake, you know! he's such a gourmand!"

"Thank you, yes I am on my way home now. Hem-m! Capitola, I counsel you to cut the acquaintance of our neighbor, Craven Le Noir."

"I have already done so; but—what in the world is the matter, that you should advise me thus?" inquired Capitola, fixing her eyes steadily upon the face of John Stone, who avoided her gaze as he answered:

"The man is not a proper associate for a young woman."

"I know that, and have cut him accordingly; but, cousin John, there is some reason for your words, that you have not expressed; and as they concern me, now I insist upon knowing what they are."

"Well! it is nothing," said the other, evasively.

"John Stone, I know better! and the more you look down and whip your boot, the surer I am that there is something I ought to know, and I will know it!"

"Well, you tormentant! have your way!—he has been speaking lightly of you—that's all! nobody made him, his tongue is no scandal."

"John Stone, what has he said?" asked Capitola, drawing her breath hardy between her closed teeth.

"Oh, thing; it replied to you."

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hunny! and the man who slanders! There is found at my present residence said John Stone, throwing the table, and rising to

stranger, laughing and "I do not endorse the point of it. I wash my young man. And then, finding the author of the name of Mr. Craven Le Noir talked in his cups," at given by one of his

in the presence of all I presently to Chereen is a shameless miscreant a noble girl! You, these words; hence, I for after this I ant any man who ven- r places, to hint this y day delight with the of the lady in question, and at Hurricane Hall, wishing you a more im- pression, and—a very n Stone, bowing and

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of woods between the in front of Hurricane who, as we have said, her gun and dog, and his game-bag well

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young girl, dismount- walked by her side

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he should have been I we've had such I enjoy your share I begin the conversation for supper, with own invention, for such a gourmand! "I may have now, you to out the ac- Craven Le Noir."

what in the should advise me, her eyes steadily, who avoided her

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him accordingly; a reason for your seed, and as they on knowing what

one other, eagerly, and the more boot, the surer I got to know, and

one your way!—he you—that's all no scandal!"

id," asked Capicola between her

"Oh, now, why should you ask?—It is nothing; it is not proper that I should tell you," replied that gentleman, in embarrassment.

"It is nothing," and yet "it is not proper that you should tell me!" How do you make that out? John Stone! leave off leading the learned bushes and listen to me!—I have to live in the same neighborhood with this man, after you have gone away, and I insist upon knowing the whole length and breadth of his business and malignity, that I may know how to judge and punish him!" said Capicola, with such grimaces of resolution that Mr. Stone, provoked at her perversity, answered:

"Well, you willful girl, listen!" And commencing, he mercifully told her all that had passed at the table.

To have seen our Cap. then! Face, neck and bosom were flushed with the crimson tide of indignation!

"You are sure of what you tell me, Cousin John?"

"The man vouches for it."

"He shall bite the dust!"

"What?"

"The slanderer shall bite the dust!"

Without more ado, down was thrown gun, game-bag, powder-flask and shot-burners, and bounding from point to point over all the intervening spaces, Capicola, rushed into Hurricane Hall, and with out an instant's delay ran straight into the parlor, where her epicurean friend, the young Croole, lay slumbering upon the lounge.

With her face now livid with concentrated rage, and her eyes glittering with suppressed high peculiar to intense passion, she stood before him and said:

"Edwin! Craven Le Noir has defamed your cousin! I get up and challenge him!"

"What did you say, Cap.?" said Mr. Percy, slightly yawning.

"Must I repeat it? Craven Le Noir has defamed my character—challenge him!"

"That would be against the law, cos.; they would indict me, sure!"

"You—you lie here and answer me in that way! Oh, that I were a man!"

"Compose yourself, sweet coz., and tell me what all this is about. Yaw-coo!—really I was asleep when you first spoke to me."

"Asleep! had you been dead and in your grave, the words that I spoke should have roused you like the trump of the archangel!" exclaimed Capicola, with the blood rushing back to her cheeks.

"Your entrance was sufficiently startling, coz. I but tell me over again—what was the occasion?"

"That scoundrel, Craven Le Noir, has slandered me. Oh, the villain! He is a base slanderer! Percy, get up this moment and challenge Le Noir! I cannot breathe freely until it is done!" exclaimed Capicola, impetuously.

"Cousin Cap., duelling is obsolete; scenes are passed; law settles everything; and here there is scarcely ground for action for libel. But be comforted, coz., for if this comes to Uncle Hurricane's ears, he'll make mince-meat of him in no time. It is all in his line; he'll chew him right up!"

"Percy, do you mean to say that you will not call out that man?" asked Capicola, drawing her breath hardly.

"Yes, coz."

"You won't fight him?"

"No, coz."

"You won't?"

"No."

"Edwin Percy, look me straight in the face!" said Cap., between her closed teeth.

"Well, I am looking you straight in the face! straight in the two blazing gray eyes, you little temptress in a teapot!—what then?"

"Do I look as though I should be in earnest in what I am about to speak?"

"I should judge so."

"Then listen, and don't take your eyes off mine until I am done speaking!"

"Very well; don't be long though, for my rather agitates me."

"I will not! hear me, then: You say that you incline to challenge Le Noir. Very good. I, on my part, here renounce all acquaintance with you! I will never sit down at the same table; enter the same room; or breathe the same air with you; never speak to you; listen to you; or recognise you in any manner, until my deep

wrongs are avenged in the punishment of my slanderer, so help me—"

"Hush—hush! don't swear, Cap.; it's profane, and unwomanly; and nothing on earth but broken oaths would be the result!"

But Cap. was off. In an instant she was down to the ground, where her groom was holding her horse, ready in case she wished to take her usual ride.

"Where is Mr. John Stone?" she asked.

"Down at the kennels, Miss," answered the boy.

She jumped into her saddle, put whip to her horse and flew over the ground between the mansion-house and the kennels.

She pulled up before the door of the main building, sprang from her saddle, threw a bridle to a man in attendance, and rushed into the house and into the presence of Mr. John Stone, who was busy in prescribing for an indisposed pointer.

He looked up in astonishment, exclaiming:

"Hullo! all the witches! I beg of you, why where on earth did you shoot from? what's up now? You look as if you were in a state of spontaneous combustion and couldn't stand it another minute."

And I can't! and I won't! John Stone, you must stand that man out!"

"What man, Cap.—what the deuce do you mean?"

"You know well enough! you do this to provoke me! I mean the man of whom you cautioned me this afternoon! the wretch who slandered me, the niece of your host!"

"Ee—ew!"

"With you do it?"

"Where's Percy?"

"On the lounge, with an ice in one hand and a novel in the other! I suppose its use minding the matter, John; he is a mere epicure; there is no fight in him! It is *you* who must vindicate your cousin's honor!"

"My cousin's honor cannot need vindication! it is unquestionable and unquestionable!"

"No smooth words, if you please, cousin John! Will you, or will you not fight that man?"

"Tut, Cap., no one really questions your honor! that man will get himself knocked into a cocked hat if he goes around talking of an honest girl!"

"A likely thing when her own cousins and guests take it so quietly!"

"What would you have them do, Cap.? The longer an affair of this kind is agitated, the more offensive it becomes! Besides, chivalry is out of date. The knights-errant are all dead."

The men are all dead! if any ever really lived!" cried Cap., in a fury. "Heaven knows I am inclined to believe them to have been a fabulous race like that of the Mastodon or the centaur. I certainly never saw a creature that deserved the name of man! The very first of your race was the meanest fellow that ever was heard of! eat the stolen apple, and when found out, laid one half of the blame on his wife and the other on his maker—" The woman who seduced him, said so and so! I don't wonder the Lord took a dislike to the race and sent a flood to sweep them all off the face of the earth—I will give you one more chance to retrieve your honor! in one word, now—will you fight that man?"

"My dear little cousin, I would do anything in reason to vindicate the assailed manhood of the whole of my sex, but really, now—"

"Will you fight that man?—one word—yes or no?"

"Tut, Cap., you are a very reckless young woman! You—its your nature—you are an incorrigible madcap! You bewitch a poor wretch until he doesn't know his head from his heels; you take his feet into his hat and covers his scalp with his boots! You are a will-o-the-wisp who lures a poor fellow on through woods, bogs and briars, until you land him in the quick sand! You whirl him around and around until he grows dizzy and delirious, and talks at random, and then you'd have him called out, you blood-thirsty little viper!"

I tell you, Cousin Cap., if I were to take up all the quibbles your hydenism might lead me into, I should have nothing else to do!"

"Then you won't fight!"

"Can't little cousin! I have a wife and family, these are powerful checks upon a man's duelling impulses!"

"Silence! you are no cousin of mine! no drop of your sluggish blood stagnates in my veins! no spark of the liquid fire of my life's current burns in your torpid arteries, else at this instant, would it set you in a flame! Never dare to call me cousin again, recalcant!" and so saying, she flung herself out of the building and into her saddle, put whip to her horse and galloped away home.

Now, Mr. Stone had privately resolved to thrash Craven Le Noir; but he did not deem it expedient to tap Cap. into his confidence. As Capicola reached the horse-block, her own groom came to take the bridle.

"Jem," she said, as she jumped from her saddle,—put Gyp up and then come to my room; I have a message to send by you."

And then with burning cheeks and flashing eyes, she went to her own sanctum, and after taking off her habit, did the most astounding thing that ever a woman of the nineteenth, or any former century attempted—she wrote a challenge to Craven Le Noir—charging him with falsehood in having maligned her honour; demanding from him "the satisfaction of a gentleman;" and requesting him as the challenged party, to name the time, place and weapons with which he would meet her.

By the time she had written, sealed and directed this warlike defiance, her young groom made his appearance.

"Jem," she asked, "do you know the way to the Hidden House?"

"Yes, Miss, sure."

"Then take this note thither, ask for Mr. Le Noir, put it into his hands, and say that you are directed to wait an answer. And listen, you need not mention to any one in this house, where you are going; nor when you return, where you have been; but bring the answer you may get directly to this room, where you will find me."

"Yes, Miss," said the boy, who was off like a flying Mercury.

Capicola threw herself into her chair to spend the slow hours until the boy's return, as well as her fierce impatience and forced inaction would permit.

At tea-time she was summoned; but excused herself from going below upon the plea of indisposition.

"Which is perfectly true," she said to herself, "since I am utterly indisposed to go. And besides, I have sworn never to sit at the same table with my cousins, until for the wrongs done me I have received ample satisfaction."

CHAPTER XLVII. CAPICOLA CAPS THE CLIMAX.

Oh! when she is angry, she is keen and shrewd; She was a wren when she went to school; And though she is but little she is fierce.

—SHAKESPEARE.

It was quite late in the evening when Jem, her messenger, returned.

"Have you an answer?" she impetuously demanded, rising to meet him as he entered.

"Yes, Miss, here it is," replied the boy, handing a neatly folded, highly perfumed little note.

"Go," said Cap., curtly, as she received it.

And when the boy had bowed and withdrawn, she threw herself into a chair, and with little respect for the pretty device of the pierced heart with which the note was sealed, she tore it open and devoured its contents.

Why did Capicola's cheeks and lips blanch white as death? Why did her eyes contract and glitter like steel-tips? Why was her breath drawn hard and laboriously through clenched teeth and livid lips.

That note was scathed in the most insulting terms.

Capicola's first impulse was to send the paper to the stove and grind those atoms to powder beneath her heel. But a second inspiration changed her purpose.

"No, no, no, I will not destroy you, precious little note! No legal document involving the ownership of the largest estate, no cherished love-letter filled with vows of undying affection, shall be more carefully guarded! Next to my heart, shall you lie. My shield and buckler shall you be! My sure defence and justification! I know what to do with you, my precious little jewel! You are

the warrant for the punishment of that man, signed by his own hand." And so saying Capitola carefully deposited the note in her bosom.

Then she lighted her chamber lamp, and taking it with her, went down stairs to her uncle's bedroom.

Taking advantage of the time when she knew he would be absorbed in a game of chess with John Stone, and she should be safe from interruption for several hours if she wished, she went to Major Warfield's little armory in the closet adjoining his room, opened the pistol-case and took from it a pair of revolvers, closed and locked the case, and with a sigh and hid the key that they might not chance to be missed until she should have time to place them.

Then she "ried back into her own chamber, locked the doors up in her own drawer, and went out with so much excitement, prepared to go to rest. Here a grave and unexpected obstacle met her; she had always been accustomed to kneel and offer up to Heaven her evening's tribute of praise and thanksgiving for the mercies of the day, and prayers for protection and blessing through the night.

Now she knelt as usual, but thanksgiving and prayer seemed frozen on her lips. How could she praise or pray with such a purpose as she had in her heart?

For the first time Capitola doubted the perfect righteousness of that purpose which was of a character to arrest her prayers upon her lips.

With a start of impatience and a heavy sigh, she sprang up and hurried into bed.

She did not sleep, but lay tossing from side to side in a feverish excitement the whole night—having, in fact, a terrible battle between her own fierce passions and her newly-awakened conscience.

Nevertheless, she arose by daybreak in the morning, dressed herself, went and unlocked her drawer, took out the pistols, carefully loaded them, and laid them down for service.

Then she went down stairs, where the servants were only just beginning to stir, and sent for her groom, Jim, whom she ordered to saddle her pony, and also to get a horse for himself to attend her in a morning ride.

After which she returned up stairs, put on her riding-habit, and buckled around her waist a morocco belt, into which she stuck the two revolvers. She then threw around her shoulders a short circular cape that concealed the weapons, and put on her hat and gloves and went below.

She found her little groom already at the door with the horses. She sprang into her saddle and, bidding Jim follow her, took the road towards Tip-Top.

She knew that Mr. Le Noir was in the habit of riding to the village every morning, and she determined to meet him. She knew, from the early hour of the day, that he could not possibly be ahead of her, and she rode on slowly, to give him an opportunity to overtake her.

Probably Craven Le Noir was later that morning than usual, for Capitola had reached the entrance of the village before she heard the sound of his horse's feet approaching behind her.

She did not wish that their encounter should be in the streets of the village, so she instantly wheeled her horse and galloped back to meet him.

As both were riding at full speed they soon met.

She first drew rein, and, standing in his way, accosted him with:

"Mr. Le Noir!"

"Your most obedient, Miss Black," he said with a deep bow.

"I happen to be without father or brother to protect me from affront, sir, and my uncle is an invalid veteran whom I will not trouble. I am, therefore, under the novel necessity of fighting my own battles. Yesterday, sir, I sent you a note demanding satisfaction for a heinous slander you circulated against me. You replied by an insulting note. You do not escape punishment! Here are two pistols; both are loaded; take either one of them; for, sir, we have met, and now we do not part until one of us falls from the horse!"

And so saying, she rode up to him and offered him the choice of the pistols.

He laughed—partly in surprise and partly in

admiration, as he said, with seeming good humor:

"Miss Black, you are a very charming young woman, and delightfully original and piquant in your pleas; but you outrage all the laws that govern the duello. You know that, as the challenged party, I have the right to the choice of time, place and arms. I made that choice yesterday. I renew it to-day. When you accede to the terms of the meeting, I shall endeavor to give you all the satisfaction you demand. Good morning, Miss."

And with a deep bow, even to the flaps of his saddle, he rode past her.

"That base insult again!" cried Capitola, with the blood rushing to her face.

Then lifting her voice she again accosted him:

"Mr. Le Noir!"

He turned, with a smile.

She held one of the pistols on the ground near him, saying:

"Take that up and defend yourself."

He waved his hand in negation, bowed, smiled, and rode on.

"Ma. Le Noir!" she called, in a peremptory tone.

Once more he turned.

She raised her pistol, took deliberate aim at his white forehead, and fired—

Bang! bang! bang! bang! bang! bang!

—Six times without an instant's intermission, until her revolver was spent.

When the smoke cleared away, a terrible vision met her eyes.

It was Craven Le Noir with his face covered with blood, reeling in his saddle, from which he soon dropped to the ground.

In falling, his foot remained hanging in the stirrup. The well-trained cavalry horse stood perfectly still, though trembling in a panic of terror, from which he might at any moment start to run, dragging the helpless body after him.

Capitola saw this danger, and not being cruel, she tempered justice with mercy; threw down her spent pistol; dismounted from her horse; went up to the fallen man; disengaged his foot from the stirrup; and taking hold of his shoulder, tried with all her might to drag the still breathing form from the dusty road where it lay in danger of being run over by wagons, to the green bank where it might lie in comparative safety.

But the heavy form was too much for her single strength. And calling her terrified groom to assist her, they removed her horse, and galloped rapidly into the village, and up to the "ladies' entrance" of the hotel, where after sending for the proprietor, she said:

"I have just been shooting Craven Le Noir for slandering me; he lies by the roadside at the entrance of the village; you had better send somebody to pick him up."

"Miss!" cried the astounded inn-keeper.

Capitola distinctly repeated her words, and then leaving the inn-keeper, transfixed with consternation, she crossed the street and entered a magistrate's office, where a little old gentleman, with a pair of green spectacles resting on his hooked nose, sat at a writing-table, giving some directions to a constable, who was standing half in hand before him.

Capitola waited until this functionary had his orders and a written paper, and had left the office, and the magistrate was alone, before she walked up to the desk and stood before him.

"Well, well, young woman! Well, well, what do you want?" inquired the old gentleman, impatiently looking up from folting his papers.

"I have come to give myself up for shooting Craven Le Noir, who slandered me," answered Capitola, quietly.

The old man let fall his hands full of papers, raised his head and stared at her over the tops of his green spectacles.

"What did you say, young woman?" he asked, in the tone of one who doubted his own ears.

"I say that I have forestalled an arrest by coming here to give myself-up for the shooting of a dastard who slandered, insulted, and refused to give me satisfaction," answered Capitola, very distinctly.

"Am I awake? Do I hear right? Do you mean to say that you have killed a man?" asked the dismayed magistrate.

"Oh! I can't say as to the killing! I shot him off his horse, and then sent Mr. Merry and his men to pick him up, while I came here to answer for myself!"

"Unfortunate girl! and how can you answer for such a dreadful deed?" exclaimed the utterly confounded magistrate.

"Oh, as to the dreadful deed of the deed, that depends on my very well. He made addresses to me; I refused him. He slandered me; I challenged him. He insulted me; I shot him."

"Miserable young woman, if this be proved true, I shall have to commit you!"

"Just as you please," said Cap., "but bless your soul, that won't help Craven Le Noir a single bit!"

As she spoke several persons entered the office in a state of high excitement—all talking at once, saying:

"That is the girl!"

"That is her!"

"She is Miss Black, old Warfield's niece."

"Yes, he said she was," etc., etc.

"What is all this, neighbors, what is all this?" inquired the troubled magistrate, rising in his place.

"Why, sir, there's been a gentleman, Mr. Craven Le Noir, shot. He has been taken to the 'Antlers,' where he lies *in articulo mortis*, and we wish him to be confronted with Miss Capitola Black, the young woman here present, that he may identify her, whom he accuses of firing six charges into him, before his death. She doesn't deny it, because he is ready to swear to her!" said Mr. Merry, who constituted himself spokesman.

"She accuses herself," said the magistrate in dismay.

"Then, sir, had she not better be taken at once to the presence of Mr. Le Noir, who may not have many minutes to live!"

"Yes, come along," said Cap. "I only gave myself up to wait for this; and as he is already at hand, let's go and have it all over, for I have been riding about in this frosty morning air, for three hours, and I have got a good appetite, and I want to go home to breakfast."

"I am afraid, young woman, you will scarcely get home to breakfast this morning," said Mr. Merry.

"Well so that presently," answered Cap., composedly, as they all left the office, and crossed the street to the "Antlers."

They were conducted by the landlord to a chamber on the first floor, where upon a bed lay stretched, almost without breath or motion, the form of Craven Le Noir. His face was still covered with blood, that the bystanders had scrupulously refused to wash off, until the arrival of the magistrate. His complexion, as far as it could be seen, was very pale. He was thoroughly prostrated, if not actually dying.

Around his bed were gathered the village doctor, the landlady, and several maid servants.

"The squire has come, sir; are you able to speak to him?" asked the landlord, approaching the bed.

"Yes—let him swear me," feebly replied the wounded man, "and then send for a clergyman." The landlady immediately left to send for Mr. Goodwin, and the magistrate approached the head of the bed, and speaking solemnly, exhorted the wounded man, as he expected soon to give an account of the works done in his body, to speak the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, without reserve, malice or exaggeration, both as to the deed, and its provocation.

"I will, I will, for I have sent for a minister, and I intend to try to make my peace with Heaven," replied Le Noir.

The magistrate then directed Capitola to come and take the stand at the foot of the bed where the wounded man, who was lying on his back, could see her without turning.

Cap. came as she was commanded, and stood there with some irrepressible and involuntary visible mischief gleaming out from under her long eye-lashes and from the corners of her dimpled lips.

The magistrate then administered the oath to Craven Le Noir, and bade him look upon Capitola and give his evidence.

He did so, and under the terrors of a guilty conscience and of expected death, his evidence

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partook more of the nature of a confession than
an accusation. He testified that he had address-
ed Capicola, and had been reviled by her; then,
under the influence of evil motives, he had cir-
culated insinuations against her honor, which
were utterly unjustifiable by facts; she, seeming
to have heard of them, took the strange course
of challenging him—just as if she had been a
man; he could not of course meet a lady in a
duel, but he had taken advantage of the techni-
cal phraseology of the challenged party, as to
time, place and weapons, to offer her a deep in-
sult; then she had waylaid him on the high-
way, offered him his choice of a pair of revolvers,
and told him, that having met, they should not
part until one or the other fell from the horse;
he had again laughingly refused the encounter
except upon the insulting terms he had before
proposed;—she had then thrown him one of the
pistols, bidding him defend himself;—he had
laughingly passed her when she called him by
name, he turned and she fired—six times in suc-
cession and he fell. He knew no more until he
was brought to his present room. He said in
conclusion, he did not wish the young girl should
be presented as she had only avenged her own
honor; and that he hoped his death would be
taken by her and her friends, as a sufficient ex-
piation of his offences against her; and lastly,
he requested that he might be left alone with the
minister.

"Bringing that unhappy young woman over to
my office, Keitham," said the magistrate, ad-
dressing himself to a constable. Then turning to
the landlord, he said:

"Sir, it would be a charity in you to put a
messenger on horseback and send him to Hurri-
cane Hall for Major Warfield, who will have to
enter into a recognizance for Miss Black's appear-
ance at court."

"Stop," said Cap., "don't be too certain of
that! 'Be always sure you're right—then go
ahead!' Is not any one here cool enough to re-
flect that if I had fired six bullets at that man's
forehead and everyone had struck, I should have
blown his head to the sky?—Will not somebody
at once wash his face and see how deep the
wounds are?"

The doctor who had been restrained by others
now took a sponge and water and cleaned the face
of Le Noir, which was found to be well peppered
with split peas!

Cap. looked around, and seeing the astonished
looks of the good people, burst into an irrepress-
ible fit of laughter, saying as soon as she had
got breath enough:

"Upon my word, neighbors, you look more
shocked, if not actually more disappointed, to find
that, after all, he is not killed, and there'll be no
spectacle, than you did at first when you thought
murder had been done."

"Will you be good enough to explain this
young woman?" said the magistrate severely.

"Certainly, for your worship seems as much
disappointed as others!" said Cap. Then turn-
ing towards the group around the bed, she said:

"You have heard Mr. Le Noir's 'last dying
speech and confession,' as he supposed it to be;
and you knew that madening provocation that
inflamed my temper against him. Last night
after having received his insulting answer to my
challenge, there was evil in my heart, I do as-
sure you! I possessed myself of my uncle's re-
volvers, and resolved to waylay him this morn-
ing, and force him to give me satisfaction, or if
he refused—well no matter! I tell you, there
was danger in me!—But, before retiring to bed
at night it is my habit to say my prayers; now
the practice of prayer and the purpose of 'red-
handed violence,' cannot exist in the same per-
son at the same time. I wouldn't sleep without
praying, and I couldn't pray without giving up
my thoughts of fatal vengeance upon Craven Le
Noir. So at last I made up my mind to spare his
life, and teach him a lesson. The next morning
I drew the charges of the revolvers, and re-loaded
them with poor powder and dried peas. Every-
thing else has happened just as he has told you.
He has received no harm, except in being terribly
frightened, and in having his beauty spoiled!—
and as for that, didn't I offer him one of the
pistols, and expose my own face to similar
damage?—for I did soon to take advantage of any
one!" said Cap., laughing.

Craven Le Noir had now raised himself up in a

sitting posture, and was looking around with an
expression of countenance which was a strange
blending of relief at this unexpected respite from
the grave and intense mortification at finding
himself in the ridiculous position in which the ad-
dress of Capicola and his own weak nerves,
cowardice, and credulity had placed him.

Cap. went up to him and said, in a consoling
voice:

"Come! thank Heaven that you are not going
to die this bout. I'm glad you repented and told
the truth; and I hope you may live long enough
to offer Heaven a truer repentance than that
which is the more effect of fright. For I tell you
which is that if it had not been for the grace of the
Lord acting upon my heart last night, your soul
might have been in Hades now."

Craven Le Noir shut his eyes, groaned, and fell
back overpowered by the reflection.

"Now, please your Worship, may I go home?"
asked Cap., demurely popping down a look
courtesy to the magistrate.

"Yes—go! go! go!" said the officer, with an
expression as though he considered our Cap.
an individual of the animal kingdom whom neither
Buffon nor any other Natural philosopher had
ever classified, and who, as a creature of unknown
habits, might sometimes be dangerous.

Cap. immediately availed herself of the per-
mission, and went out to look for her servant and
horses.

But Jim, the first moment he had found him-
self unwatched, had put out as fast as he could fly
to Hurricane Hall, to inform Major Warfield of
what had occurred.

And Capicola after losing a great deal of time
in looking for him, mounted her horse and was
just about to start, when who should ride up in
hot haste but Old Hurricane, attended by Wool.

"Stop there!" he shouted, as he saw Cap.

She obeyed; and he sprang from his horse
with the agility of youth, and helped her to de-
scend from her.

Then drawing her arm within his own, he led
her into the parlor, and putting an unusual re-
straint upon himself, he ordered her to tell him
all about the affair.

Cap. sat down and gave him the whole history
from beginning to end.

Old Hurricane could not sit still to hear. He
strode up and down the room, striking his stick
upon the floor, and uttering inarticulate sounds
of rage and defiance.

When Cap. had finished her story he suddenly
stopped before her, brought down the point of his
stick with a resounding thump upon the floor,
and exclaimed:

"Dumny, you New York newsboy, will you
never be a woman? Why the demon didn't you
tell me, sirrah? I would have called the fellow
out and chastised him to your heart's content,
Hang it, Miss, answer me and say."

"Because you are on the invalid list and I am
in sound condition, and capable of taking my own
part," said Cap.

"Then, answer me this: while you were taking
your own part, why the foul fiend didn't you
pepper him with something sharper than dried
peas?"

"I think he is quite as severely punished in
suffering from extreme terror and intense mor-
tification and public ridicule," said Cap.

"And now, uncle, I have not eaten a single
blessed mouthful, this morning, and I am hungry
enough to eat up Gyp, or to satisfy Patty."

Old Hurricane, perceiving his excitement to
subside in a few expiring groans, rang the bell
and gave orders for breakfast to be served.

And after that meal was over, he set out with
his niece for Hurricane Hall.

And upon arriving at home, he addressed a
letter to Mr. Le Noir, to the effect that as soon as
the letter should have recovered from the effect of
his fright and mortification, he Major Warfield,
should demand and expect satisfaction.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

BLACK DONALD'S LAST ATTEMPT.

Who can express the horror of that night,
When darkness lent his robes to monster fear?
And heaven's black mantle, banishing the light,
Made everything in fearful form appear.

—BAXTON.

Let it not be supposed that Black Donald had
forgotten his promise to Colonel Le Noir, or was
indifferent to its performance.

But many perilous failures had taught him
caution.

He had watched and waylaid Capicola in her
rides. But the girl seemed to beat a charmed
safety; for never once had he caught sight of her
except in company with her groom and with
Craven Le Noir. And very soon by eaves-droop-
ing on these occasions, he learnt the secret de-
sign of the son to forestall the father, and run off
with the heiress.

And as Black Donald did not foresee what suc-
cess Craven Le Noir might have with Capicola, he
felt the more urgent necessity for prompt action
on his own part.

He might indeed have brought his men and at-
tacked and overcome Capicola's attendants in
open day; but the enterprise must needs have
been attended with great bloodshed and loss of
life, which would have made a sensation in the
neighborhood, that Black Donald, in the present
state of his fortunes, was by no means ambitious
of daring.

In a word, had such an act of unparalleled
violence been attempted, the better it succeeded
the greater would have been the indignation of
the people, and the whole country would prob-
ably have risen and armed themselves, and hunted the
outlaws, as so many wild beasts, with horses and
hounds.

Therefore Black Donald preferred quietly to
sneak his victim, so as to leave no trace of her
"taking off," but to allow it to be supposed that
she had eloped.

He resolved to undertake this adventure alone,
though to himself personally this plan was even
more dangerous than the other.

He determined to gain access to her chamber,
secretly himself anywhere in the room, (except
under the bed, where his instincts informed him
that Capicola every night looked,) and when the
household should be buried in repose, steal out
upon her, overpower, gag, and carry her off, in
the silence of the night, leaving no trace of his
own presence behind.

By means of one of his men, who went about
unattended among the negroes, buying up mats
and baskets, that the latter were in the habit of
making for sale, he learned that Capicola occupied
the same remote chamber, in the oldest part of
the house; but that a guest slept in the room
next, and another in the one opposite hers. And
that the house was besides full of visitors from
the city, who had come down to spend the sport-
ing season, and that they were hunting all day
and carousing all night from one week's end to
another.

On hearing this, Black Donald quickly compre-
hended that it was no time to attempt the ab-
duction of the maiden, with the least probability
of success. All would be risked, and most prob-
ably lost in the endeavor.

He resolved, therefore, to wait until the house
should be clear of company, and the household
fallen into their accustomed carelessness and
monotony.

He had to wait much longer than he had re-
counted upon—through October and through No-
vember, when he first heard of and laughed over
Cap's "duel" with Craven Le Noir, and con-
gratulated himself upon the fact that that rival
was no longer to be feared. He had also to wait
through two-thirds of the month of December,
because a party had come down to enjoy a short
season of fox-hunting. They went away just be-
fore Christmas.

And then at last came Black Donald's opportu-
nity! And a fine opportunity it was! That
Satan himself engaged to furnish him with one to
order, it could not have been better!

The reader must know, that throughout Vir-
ginia the Christmas week, from the day after
Christmas until the day after New Year's, is the
negroes' saturnalia! There are usually eight

days of incessant dancing, feasting and frolicking from quarter to quarter, and from barn to barn. Then the banjo, the fiddle and the "bones," are heard from morning until night, and from night until morning.

And nowhere was this annual octave of festivity held more sacred than at Hurricane Hall. It was the will of Major Warfield that they should have their full satisfaction out of their seven days' carnival. He usually gave a dinner party on Christmas day, after which his people were free until the third of January.

"Dommy, mum!" he would say to Mrs. Conditment, "they wait on us fifty-one weeks in the year, and it's hard if we can't wait on ourselves the fifty-second!"

Small thanks to Old Hurricane for his self-denial! He did nothing for himself or others, and Mrs. Conditment and Capitola had a hot time of it in serving him. Mrs. Conditment had to do all the cooking and housework. And Cap. had to perform most of the duties of Major Warfield's valet. And that was the way in which Old Hurricane waited on himself.

It happened, therefore that about the middle of the Christmas week, being Wednesday, the twenty-eighth of December, all the house-servants and farm-laborers from Hurricane Hall went off in a body to a bawdy break-down given at a farm five miles across the country.

And Major Warfield, Mrs. Conditment and Capitola were the only living beings left in the old house that night.

Black Donald, who had been prowling about the premises evening after evening, watching his opportunity to effect his nefarious object, soon discovered the outward bound stampede of the negroes, and the unprotected state in which the old house, for that night only would be left. And he determined to take advantage of the circumstance to consummate his wicked purpose.

In its then defenceless condition, he could easily have mustered his force and carried off his prize without immediate personal risk. But, as we said before, he eschewed violence, as being likely to provoke after effects of a too fatal character.

He resolved rather at once to risk his own personal safety in the quieter plan of abduction which he had formed.

He determined that as soon as it should be dark, he would watch his opportunity to enter the house, steal to Cap's chamber, secrete himself in a closet, and when all should be quiet, "in the dead waste and middle of the night," he would come out, master her, stop her mouth, and carry her off.

When it became quite dark he approached the house, and hid himself under the steps beneath the back door leading from the hall into the garden, to watch his opportunity of entering. He soon found that his enterprise required great patience as well as courage. He had to wait more than two hours before he heard the door unlocked and opened.

He then peered from his hiding place, and saw Old Hurricane taking his way out towards the garden.

Now was his time to slip unperceived into the house. He stealthily came out of his hiding place, crept up the portico stairs to the back door, noiselessly turned the latch, entered, and closed it behind him. He had just time to open a side door on his right hand, and conceal himself in a wood closet under the stairs, when he heard the footsteps of Old Hurricane returning.

The old man came in, and Black Donald laughed to himself to hear with what caution he looked bolted, and barred the doors to keep out house-breakers!

"Ah, old fellow! you are fastening the stable after the horse has been stolen!" said Black Donald to himself.

As soon as Old Hurricane had passed by the closet in which the outlaw was concealed, and had gone into the parlor, Black Donald determined to risk the ascent into Capitola's chamber. From the description given by his men, who had once succeeded in finding their way thither, he knew very well where to go.

Noislessly, therefore, he left his place of concealment, and crept out to reconnoitre the hall, which he found deserted.

Old Hurricane's shawl, hat and walking-stick were deposited in one corner. In case of being

met on the way, he put the hat on his head, wrapped the shawl around his shoulders, and took the stick in his hand.

His forethought proved to be serviceable. He went through the hall and up the first flight of stairs without interruption; but on going along the hall of the second story he met Mrs. Conditment coming out of Old Hurricane's room.

"Yonr sippers are on the hearth, your gown is at the fire and the water is boiling to make your punch, Major Warfield," said the old lady, in passing.

"Umph, umph, umph," grunted Black Donald in reply.

The house-keeper then bade him good-night, saying that she was going at once to her room.

"Umph!" assented Black Donald. And so they parted, and this peril was passed.

Black Donald went up the second flight of stairs and then down a back passage and a narrow staircase, along a corridor and through several untenant rooms, and into another passage, and finally through a side door leading into Capitola's chamber.

Here he looked around for a safe hiding-place—there was a high bedstead curtained; two deep windows also curtained; two closets; a dressing bureau work stand, wash stand and two arm chairs. The forethought of little Plinpat had caused her to kindle a fire on the hearth and place a waiter of refreshments on the workstand, so as to make all comfortable before she had left with the other negroes to go to the banjo breakdown.

Among the edibles, Plinpat had been careful to leave a small bottle of brandy, a pitcher of cream, a few eggs and some spice, saying to herself, "Long as it was Christmas time Miss Caterpillar might want a sup of egg-nog quiet to herself, just as much as old marse did his whiskey punch"—and never fancying that her young mistress would require a more delicate lunch than her old master.

Black Donald laughed as he saw this outlay, and remarking that the young occupant of the chamber must have an appetite of her own, he put the neck of the brandy bottle to his lips and took what he called "a hearty swig."

Then vowing that Old Hurricane knew what good liquor was, he replaced the bottle and looked around to find the best place for his concealment.

He soon determined to hide himself behind the thick folds of the window curtain nearest the door, so that immediately after the entrance of Capitola he could glide to the door, look it, withdraw the key and have the girl at once in his power.

He took a second "swig" at the brandy bottle, and then went into his place of concealment to wait events.

That same hour Capitola was her uncle's partner in a prolonged game of chess. It was near eleven o'clock before Cap., heartily tired of the battle, permitted herself to be beaten in order to get to bed.

With a satisfied chuckle, Old Hurricane arose from his seat, lighted two bed-chamber lamps, gave one to Capitola, took the other himself, and started off for his room, followed by Cap. as far as the head of the first flight of stairs, where she bade him good night.

She waited until she saw him enter his room, heard him lock his door on the inside and thrust himself down heavily into his chair, then she went on her own way.

She hurried up the second flight of stairs, and along the narrow passages, empty rooms, steep steps, and dreary halls, until she reached the door of her own dormitory.

She turned the latch and entered the room. The first thing that met her sight was the waiter of provisions upon the stand. And at this fresh instance of her little maid's forethought, she burst into an uncontrollable fit of laughter.

She did not see a dark figure glide from behind the window curtains, steal to the door, turn the lock and withdraw the key.

She still retaining her prejudice against the presence of food in her bed-chamber, she lifted up the waiter in both hands to carry it out into the passage, turned and stood face to face with—Black Donald!

CHAPTER XXIX.

THE AWFUL PERIL OF CAPITOLA.

One of this nettles, danger,
I'll pluck the flower, safety!—SHAKESPEARE.

Capitola's blood seemed to turn to ice, and her form to stone at the sight! Her first impulse was to scream and let fall the waiter! She contrived herself and repressed the scream, though she was very near dropping the waiter.

Black Donald looked at her and laughed aloud at her consternation, saying with a chuckle:

"You did not expect to see me here to-night, did you now, my dear?"

She gazed at him in a silent panic for a moment.

Then her faculties, that had been suddenly dispersed by the shock, as suddenly rallied to her rescue.

In one moment she understood her real position.

Black Donald had looked her in with himself, and held the key; so she could not hope to get out.

The loudest scream that she might utter would never reach the distant chamber of Major Warfield, or the still more remote apartment of Mrs. Conditment; so she could not hope to bring any one to her assistance.

She was therefore entirely in the power of Black Donald. She fully comprehended this, and said to herself:

"Now, my dear Cap., if you don't look sharp your hour is come! Nothing on earth will save you, Cap., but your own wits! For if ever I saw mischief in any one's face, it is in that fellow's that is eating you up with his goat eyes at the same time that he is laughing at you with his big mouth! Now, Cap., my little man, be a woman! don't you stick at trifles! Think of Jael and Sisera! Think of Judith and Holofernes! And the devil and Doctor Faust, if necessary, and don't you blench! All stratagems are fair in love or war—especially in war, and most especially in such a war as this is likely to be—a contest in close quarters for dear life!"

All this passed through her mind in one moment, and in the next her plan was formed.

Setting her waiter down upon the table, and throwing herself into one of the arm-chairs, she said:

"Well, upon my word, I think a gentleman might let a lady know when he means to pay her a domiciliary visit at midnight!"

"Upon my word, I think you are very cool!" replied Black Donald, throwing himself into the second arm-chair on the other side of the stand of refreshments.

"People are likely to be cool on a December night, with the thermometer at zero, and the ground three feet under the snow," said Cap., nothing daunted.

"Capitola, I admire you! You are a cucumber. That's what you are, a cucumber."

"A pickled one?" asked Cap.

"Yes! and as pickled cucumbers are good to give one an appetite, I think I shall fall to and eat."

"Do so," said Cap., "for Heaven forbid that I should fall in hospitality!"

"Why, really, this looks as though you had expected a visitor—doesn't it?" asked Black Donald, helping himself to a huge slice of ham, and stretching his feet out towards the fire.

"Well, yes, rather; though, to say the truth, it was not your reverence I expected," said Cap.

"Ah? somebody else's reverence, eh? Well, let them come! I'll be ready for them!" said the outlaw, pouring out and quaffing a large glass of brandy. He drank it, sat down the glass, and turning to our little heroine, inquired:

"Capitola, did you ever have Craven Le Noir here to supper with you?"

"You insult me! I scorn to reply!" said Cap.

"Who-e-w! what long whiskers our Grimalkin's got! You scorn to reply! Then you really are not afraid of me?" asked the robber, rolling a great piece of cheese in his mouth.

"Afraid of you? No, I guess not," replied Cap., with a toss of her head.

"Yet, I might do you some harm."

"But you won't."

"Why won't I?"

"Because it won't pay."

OF CAPITOla.

OF CAPITOla.

OF CAPITOla.

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OF CAPITOla.

"Why won't it?"

"Because you couldn't do me any harm, unless you were to kill me, and you would gain nothing by my death, except a few trinkets that you may have without."

"Then, you are really not afraid of me?" he asked, taking another deep draught of brandy.

"Not a bit of it—I rather like you."

"Come, now, you're running a rig upon a fellow," said the outlaw, winking, and depositing a huge chunk of bread in his capacious jaws.

"No, indeed! I liked you before I saw you! I always did like people that make other people's hair stand on end! Don't you remember when you first came here disguised as a peddler, though I did not know who you were, when we were talking of Black Donald, and everybody was abusing him, except myself, I took his part, and said that, for my part, I liked Black Donald, and wanted to see him?"

"Sure enough, my jewel, so you did! and didn't I bravely risk my life, by throwing off my disguise, to gratify your landable wish?"

"So you did, my hero!"

"Ah, but well as you liked me, the moment you thought me in your power, didn't you leap upon my shoulders like a catamount, and cling there, shouting to all the world to come and help you, for that you had caught Black Donald, and would do before you would give him up?"

"And you, my hero, you thrust for my blood, and you pretended to like me!" said Black Donald, eyeing her from head to foot, with a sly leer.

Cap. returned the look with interest. Dropping her head on one side, she glanced upwards, from the corner of her eye, with an expression of "infinite" humor, mischief and roguery, saying:

"Let me tell you now why I did that!"

"Because you wanted me captured, I suppose."

"No, indeed, but, because—"

"Well, what?"

"Because—I wanted you to carry me off!"

"Well, I declare, I never thought of that!" said the outlaw, dropping his bread and cheese, and staring at the young girl.

"Well, you might have thought of it then: I was tired of hum-drum life, and I wanted to see adventures!" said Cap.

Black Donald looked at the mad girl from head to foot, and then said, coolly:

"Miss Black, I am afraid you are not good."

"You are—before folks!" said Cap.

"And so you really wished me to carry you off?"

"I should think so! I didn't stick to you until you dropped me?"

"Certainly: and now if you really like me as well as you say you do, come give me a kiss."

"I won't!" said Cap., "until you have done your supper and washed your face. Your beard is full of crumbs!"

"Very well, I can wait awhile! meantime just brew me a bowl of egg-nog, by way of a night-cap, will you?" said the outlaw, drawing off his boots and stretching his legs to the fire.

"Agreed; but it takes two to make egg-nog; you'll have to whisk up the whites of the eggs into froth, while I beat the yellows, and mix the other ingredients," said Cap.

"Just so," assented the outlaw, standing up and taking off his coat, and flinging it upon the floor.

Cap. shuddered, but went on calmly with her preparations. There were two little white bowls sitting one within the other upon the table. Cap. took them apart and set them side by side and began to break the eggs, letting the white slip into one bowl and dropping the yellow into the other.

Black Donald sat down in his shirt-sleeves, took one of the bowls from Capicola and began to whisk up the whites with all his might and main.

Capicola beat up the yellows, gradually mixing the sugar with it. In the course of her work she complained that the heat of the fire scorched her face, and she drew her chair farther towards the corner of the chimney, and pulled the stand after her.

"Oh! you are trying to get away from me," said Black Donald, hitting his own chair in the same direction, close to the stand, so that he sat immediately in front of the fire-place.

Cap. smiled, and went on beating her eggs

and sugar together. Then she stirred in the brandy and poured in the milk, and took the bowl from Black Donald, and laid on the foam. Finally, she tilted a goblet with the rich compound and handed it to her uncanny guest.

Black Donald untied his neck cloth, threw it upon the floor, and sipped his egg-nog, all the while looking over the top of the glass at Capicola.

"Miss Black," he said, "it must be past twelve o'clock."

"I suppose it is," said Cap.

"Then it must be long past your usual hour of retiring."

"Of course it is," said Cap.

"Then what are you waiting for?"

"For my company to go home," replied Cap.

"Meaning me?"

"Meaning you."

"Oh, don't mind me, my dear."

"Very well," said Cap., "I shall not trouble myself about you," and her tones were steady when her heart seemed turned into a ball of ice through her.

Black Donald went on slowly sipping his egg-nog, filling up his goblet when it was empty, and looked at Capicola over the top of the glass. At last he said:

"I have been watching you, Miss Black."

"Little need to tell me that," said Cap.

"And I have been reading you."

"Well, I hope the page was entertaining."

"Well—yes, my dear, it was, rather so. But why don't you proceed?"

"Proceed—with what?"

"With what you are thinking of, my darling."

"I don't understand you."

"Why don't you offer to go down stairs and bring up some lemon?"

"Oh, I'll go in a moment," said Cap., "if you wish."

"Ha—ha—ha—ha! Of course you will, my darling! and you'd deliver me into the hands of the Philistines, just as you did my poor men when you fooled them about the vitamins!"

I know your tricks, and all your acting has no other effect on me than to make me use your wonderful coolness and courage: my dear, stop puzzling your little head with schemes to baffle me. You are like the eaged stalling! You—can't—get—out!" chuckled Black Donald, hitting his chair nearer to hers. He was now right upon the centre of the rug.

Capicola turned very pale, but not with fear, though Black Donald thought she did, and roared with laughter.

"Have you done your supper?" she asked, with a sort of awful calmness.

"Yes, my duck," replied the outlaw, pouring the rest of his egg-nog into his goblet, drinking it at a draught, and chucking as he set down the glass.

Capicola then lifted the stand with the refreshments to remove it to its usual place.

"What are you going to do, my dear?" asked Black Donald.

"Clear away the things and set the room in order," said Capicola, in the same awfully calm tone.

"A nice little housewife you'll make, my duck!" said Black Donald.

Capicola set the stand in its corner, and then removed her old arm-chair to its place before the dressing-bureau.

Nothing now remained upon the rug except Black Donald seated in the arm-chair.

Capicola paused; her blood seemed freezing in her veins; her heart beat thickly; her throat was choked; her head full nearly to bursting, and her eyes were veiled by a blinding film.

"Come, come, my duck—make haste; it is late; haven't you done setting the room in order yet?" said Black Donald, impatiently.

"In one moment," said Capicola, coming behind his chair and leaning upon the back of it.

"Donald," she said, with dreadful calmness, "I will not now call you Black Donald! I will call you as your poor mother did, when your young soul was as white as your skin, before she ever dreamed her boy would grow black with crime. I will call you simply Donald, and entreat you to hear me for a few minutes."

"Talk on, then, but talk fast, and leave my mother alone. Let the dead rest!" exclaimed

the outlaw, with a violent convulsion of his bedridden chin and lip that did not escape the notice of Capicola, who hoped some good of this betrayal of feeling.

"Donald," she said, "men call you a man of blood; they say that your hand is red and your soul is black with crime."

"They may say what they like; I care not," laughed the outlaw.

"But I do not believe all this of you. I believe that there is good in all, and much good in you; that there is hope for all, and strong hope for you."

"Boah! stop talking poetry! 'Taint in my line, nor yours either!" laughed Black Donald.

"But truth is in all our lines. Donald! I repeat it, men call you a man of blood! They say that your hands are red and your soul black with crime. Black Donald they call you! But Donald, you never have yet stained your soul with a crime as black as that which you think of perpetrating to-night!"

"It must be near one o'clock, and I'm tired," replied the outlaw, with a yawn.

"All your former acts," continued Capicola, in the same voice of awful calmness, "have been those of a bold, bad man! I said this would be that of a base one!"

"Take care, girl! no bad names! You are in my power! at my mercy!"

"I know my position; but I must continue. Hitherto you have robbed mail coaches and broken into rich men's houses. In doing thus, you have always boldly risked your life, often at those fearful odds that men have tumbled at their feet to bear it. And even woman, while deploring your crimes, have admired your courage."

"I thank 'em kindly for it. Women always like men with a spice of the devil in them," laughed the outlaw.

"No, they do not," said Capicola, gravely.

"they like men of strength, courage, and spirit—but those qualities do not come from the Evil One, but from the Lord, who is the giver of all good. Your Creator, Donald, gave you the strength, courage, and spirit that all men and women so much admire; but He did not give you these great powers that you might use them in the service of his enemy, the devil."

"I declare there is really something in that—I never thought of that before."

"Nor ever thought, perhaps, that however misguided you may have been, there is really something great and good in yourself that might yet be used for the good of all, and the glory of God," said Capicola, solemnly.

"Ha-ha-ha! Oh, you flatterer. Come—have you done? I tell you it is after one o'clock, and I am tired to death."

"Donald, in all your former acts of lawlessness your antagonists were strong men; and as you boldly risked your life in your depredations, your acts, though bad, were not base. But now your antagonist is a feeble girl, who has been unfortunate from her very birth—to destroy her would be an act of baseness to which you never yet descended."

"Boah! who talks of destruction? I am tired of all this nonsense. I mean to carry you off, and there's an end of it," said the outlaw, doggedly rising from his seat.

"Bro?" said Capicola, turning ashen pale—"stop, sit down and hear me for just five minutes; I will not tax your patience longer."

The robber, with a loud laugh, sank again into his chair, saying:

"Very well; talk on for just five minutes and not a single second longer; but if you think in that time to persuade me to leave this house of mine without you, you are widely out of your reckoning, my duck, that's all."

"Donald, do not sink your soul to perdition by a crime that Heaven cannot pardon. Listen to me; I have jewels here worth several thousand dollars. If you will consent to go, I will give them all to you, and let you quietly out of the front door, and never say one word to mortal of what has passed here to-night."

"Ha-ha-ha! why, my dear, how green you must think me! What hinders me from possessing myself of your jewels as well as of yourself?" said Black Donald, impatiently rising.

"Sit still! the five minutes' grace are not half out yet!" said Capicola, in a breathless voice.

"So they are not! I will keep my promise," replied Black Donald—laughing, and again dropping into his seat.

"Donald, uncle pays me a quarterly sum for pocket-money, which is at least five times as much as I can spend in this quiet country place. It has been accumulating for years until now I have several thousand dollars, all of my own. You shall have it if you will only go quietly away and leave me in peace!" prayed Capitola.

"My dear, I intend to take that anyhow! I take it as your bridal dower, you know. For I'm going to carry you off and make an honest wife of you!" "Dusaid, give up this heinous purpose!" cried Capitola, in an agony of supplication, as she leant over the back of the outlaw's chair.

"Yes, you know I will! ha—ha—ha!" laughed the robber.

"Man, for your own sake give it up!" "Ha-ha-ha! for my sake!"

"Yes, for yours!" Black Donald, have you ever reflected on death?" asked Capitola, in a low and terrible voice.

"I have risked it often enough; but as to reflecting upon it, it will be time enough to do that when it comes. I am a powerful man, in the prime and pride of life," said the athlete, stretching himself exultingly.

"Yet it might come! death might come with sudden, overwhelming power and hurl you to destruction. What a terrible thing for this magnificent frame of yours, this glorious handiwork of the Creator to be hurled to swift destruction, and for the soul that animates it to be cast into hell!"

"Booth, again! that is a subject for the pulpit, not for a pretty girl's room. If you really think me such a handsome man, why don't you go with me at once and say no more about it," roared the outlaw, laughing.

"Black Donald—will you leave my room?" cried Capitola, in an agony of prayer.

"No," answered the outlaw, mocking her tone. "Is there no inducement that I can hold out to you, to leave me?"

"None!"

Capitola raised herself from her leaning posture, took a step backward so that she stood entirely free from the trap-door; then slipping her foot under the rug, she placed it lightly on the spring-bolt, which she was careful not to press; the ample fall of her dress concealed the position of her foot.

Capitola was now paler than a corpse, for hers was the pallor of a living horror! Her heart beat violently, her head throbbed, her voice was broken as she said:

"Man, I will give you one more chance. Oh, man, pity yourself as I pity you, and consent to leave me."

"Ha-ha-ha! it is quite likely that I will! isn't it now? No, my duck! I haven't watched and planned for this chance for this long time past to give it up now that you are in my power. A likely story, indeed! And now the five minutes grace are quite up."

"Stop! don't move yet! before you stir say, 'Lord have mercy on me!'" said Capitola solemnly.

"Ha-ha-ha! that's a pretty idea! why should I say that?"

"Say it to please me! only say it, Black Donald!"

"But why to please you?"

"Because I wish not to kill both your body and soul! because I would not send you prayerless into the presence of your Creator! for, Black Donald, within a few seconds your body will be hurled to swift destruction, and your soul will stand before the bar of God!" said Capitola, with her foot upon the spring of the concealed trap.

She had scarcely ceased speaking before he bounded to his feet, whirled around, and confronted her, like a lion at bay, roaring forth:

"You have a revolver there, girl! move a finger and I shall throw myself upon you like an avalanche!"

"I have no revolver! watch my hands as I take them forth and see!" said Capitola, stretching her arms out towards him.

"What do you mean, then, by your talk of sudden destruction?" inquired Black Donald, voice of thunder.

"Mean that it hangs over you! that it is

imminent! that it is not to be escaped! Oh, man, call on God, for you have not a minute to live!"

The outlaw gazed on her in astonishment. Well he might, for there she stood, paler than marble! sterner than steel! with no look of human feeling about her but the gleaming lights of her terrible eyes, and the beading sweat upon her death-like brow.

For an instant the outlaw gazed on her in consternation, and then recovering himself, he burst into a loud laugh, exclaiming:

"Ha-ha-ha! Well, I suppose this is what people would call a piece of spirit! I am doing you expect to frighten me, my dear, as you did Craven Le Noir with the pass!"

"Say—'Lord have mercy on my soul,' say it Black Donald, say it, I beseech you!" she prayed.

"Ha, ha, ha, my dear! you may say it for me! and to reward you, I will give you—such a hint it will put life into those marble cheeks of yours!" he laughed.

"I will say it for you! May the Lord pity and save Black Donald's soul, if that be yet possible for the Saviour's sake!" said Capitola, in a sad and fatal whisper.

He laughed aloud, stretched forth his arm, and rushed to clasp her.

She pressed the spring.

The drop fell with a tremendous crash!

The outlaw shot downwards! there was an instant's vision of a white and panic-stricken face, and then a square, black opening, was all that remained where the terrible intruder had sat.

No light or sound came up from that horrible pit, to hint of the secrets of the prison depths.

One shuddering glance at the awful void, and then Capitola turned and threw herself, face downwards, upon the bed, not daring to rejoice in the safety that had been purchased by such a dreadful deed, feeling that it was an awful, though a complete victory!

CHAPTER I.

THE NEXT MORNING.

Oh, such a day!
So fought, so followed and so fairly won
Came not till now to dignify the times
Since Caesar's fortunes.—SHAKESPEARE.

Capitola lay upon the bed, with her face buried in the pillow, the greater portion of the time from two o'clock until day. An uncontrollable horror prevented her from turning lest she should see the yawning mystery in the middle of the floor, or hear some awful sound from its unknown depths.

The very shadows on the walls thrown up wildly by the expiring firelight, were objects of grotesque terror. Never, never, in the whole youth of strange vicissitude, had the nerves of this brave girl been so tremendously shaken and prostrated.

It was late in the morning when at last nature succumbed, and she sank into a deep sleep. She had not slept long when she was aroused from a profound state of insensibility by a loud, impatient knocking at her door.

She started up wildly and gazed around her. For a minute she could not remember what were the circumstances under which she had lain down, or what was that vague feeling of horror and alarm that possessed her. Then the yawning trap-door, the remnants of the supper, and Black Donald's coat, hat and boots upon the bed, drove in upon her reeling brain the memory of the night of terror!

The knocking continued more loudly and impatiently, accompanied by the voice of Mrs. Conditment, crying:

"Miss Capitola! Miss Capitola! why, what can be the matter with her?—Miss Capitola!"

"Eh! what? yes!" answered Capitola, pressing her hands to her feverish forehead, and putting back her dishevelled hair.

"Why, how soundly you sleep, my dear! I've been calling and rapping here for a quarter of an hour! Good gracious child, what made you oversleep yourself so?"

"I—did not get to bed till very late," said Capitola, confusedly.

"Well, well, my dear, make haste now, your uncle is none of the patientest, and he has been

waiting breakfast for some time! Come, open the door and I will help you to dress, so that you may be ready sooner."

Capitola rose from the side of the bed, where she had been sitting, and went cautiously around that gaping trap-door to her chamber door, when she missed the key, and suddenly remembered that it had been in Black Donald's pocket when he fell. A shudder thrilled her frame at the thought of that horrible fall.

"Well, well, Miss Capitola, why don't you open the door?" cried the old lady, impatiently.

"Mrs. Conditment, I have lost the key—dropped it down the trap-door. Please ask uncle to send for some one to take the lock off—and don't wait breakfast for me."

"Well, I do think that was very careless, my dear; but I'll go at once," said the old lady, moving away.

She had not been gone more than ten minutes, when Old Hurricane was heard coming, clattering along the hall, and calling:

"What now, you imp of Satan? What mischief have you done at now? Opening the trap-door, on mischief-making key! I wish from the bottom of my soul you had fallen into it, and I should have got rid of one trial! Losing your key, you careless baggage! I've a great mind to leave you looked up there for ever."

This scolding, Old Hurricane reached the spot, and began to ply screw-drivers and chisels until at length the strong lock yielded, and he opened the door.

There a vision met his eyes that arrested his steps upon the very threshold; the remains of a bacchanalian supper; a man's coat and hat and boots upon the floor; in the midst of the room the great square, black opening; and beyond it, standing upon the hearth, the form of Capitola, with disordered dress, dishevelled hair, and wild aspect.

"Oh, uncle, see what I have been obliged to do!" she exclaimed, extending both her arms down towards the opening with a look of blinded horror and inspiration, such as might have sat upon the countenance of some scornful priestess of the olden time.

"What—what—what!" cried the old man, nearly dumb with amazement.

"Black Donald was in my room last night; he stole from his concealment and looked the door on the inside, and withdrew the key, thus locking me in with himself, and—"

she ceased and struck both hands to her face, shuddering from head to foot.

"Go on, dear," thundered Old Hurricane, in an agony of anxiety.

"—I escaped harmless! Oh, I did, sir, but at what a fearful price!"

"Explain! Explain!" cried Old Hurricane, in breathing agitation.

"I drew him to sit upon the chair on the rug, and—"

she again shuddered from head to foot—"and I sprung the trap and precipitated him to—"

—oh, Heaven of Heavens! where?—I know not!"

"But you—you were unharmed?"

"Yes, Yes!"

"Oh, Cap. I! Oh, my dear Cap. I! Thank heaven for that!"

"But, uncle, where—oh, where did he go?" inquired Capitola, almost wildly.

"Who the demon cares? Perdition, I hope and trust, with all my heart and soul!" roared Old Hurricane, with emphasis, as he approached and looked down the opening.

"Uncle, what is below there?" asked Capitola, anxiously, pointing down the abyss.

"An old collar, as I have told you long ago. A little there! are you killed, as you describe, by you atrocious villain?" roared Old Hurricane, stooping down into the opening.

A feeble, distant moan answered him.

"Oh, heaven! he is living! he is living! I have not killed him!" cried Capitola, clasping her hands.

"Why, I do believe you are glad of it!" exclaimed Old Hurricane, in astonishment.

"Oh, yes, yes, for it was a fearful thought that I had been compelled to take a sacred life to count an immortal soul unprepared to its account!"

"Well! his neck isn't broken, it appears, or he couldn't groan; but I hope and trust that every other bone in his body is!" Mrs. Condit-

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ment, mum! I'll trouble you to put on your bonnet and walk over to Ray's and tell him to come here directly! I must send for the constable," said Old Hurricane, going to the door and speaking to his housekeeper, who, with an appalled countenance, had been a silent spectator of all that had passed.

As soon as the old woman had gone to do her errand he turned again, and stooping down the hole, exclaimed:

"I say, you scoundrel down there! What do you think of yourself now? Are you much hurt, you knave? Is every one of your bones broken, as they deserve to be, you villain? Answer me, you varlet!"

A low deep moan was the only response.

"If that means yes, I'm glad to hear it, you wretch. You'll go to the camp-meeting with us again, won't you, you knave! You'll preach against evil passions and profane swearing, looking right straight at me all the time, until you bring the eyes of the whole congregation upon me as sinners above all sinners, you scoundrel! You'll turn me out of my own bed and away from my own board, won't you, you villain? Won't you, precious Father Gray? Oh, we'll Father Gray you! Demmy, the next time a trap-door falls under you, you rascal, there shall be a rope around your neck to keep you from the second, precious Father Gray!"

"Uncle! uncle! that is cowardly!" exclaimed Capitola.

"What is cowardly, Miss Impertinence?"

"To insult and abuse a fallen man who is in your power! The poor man is badly hurt, may be dying, for aught you know, and you stand over him and berate him when he cannot even answer you!"

"Urn, umph, umph; demmy, you're—umph, well, he is fallen, fallen pretty badly, eh? and if he should come around after this, the next fall he gets will be like to break his neck, eh?—I say, you gentleman below there—Mr. Black Donald—precious Father Gray—you'll keep quiet, won't you, while we go and get our breakfast? do, now! Come, Cap., come down and pour out my coffee, and by the time we get through, old Bay will be here."

Capitola complied and they left the room together.

The overseer came in while they were at breakfast, and with his hair standing on end, listened to the account of the capture of the outlaw by our heroine.

"And now saddle Fleetfoot and ride for your life to Tip-Top and bring a pair of constables," were the last orders of Old Hurricane.

While Mr. Ray was gone on his errand, Major Warfield, Capitola and Mrs. Condiment remained below stairs.

It was several hours before the messenger returned with the constables, and with several neighbors whom interest and curiosity had instigated to join the party.

As soon as they arrived, a long ladder was procured and carried up into Capitola's chamber and let down through the trap door. Fortunately it was strong enough, for when the foot of the ladder found the door of the cellar, the head rested securely against the edge of the opening.

In a moment the two constables began singly to descend, the foremost one carrying a lighted candle in his hand.

The remaining members of the party, consisting of Major Warfield, Capitola, Mrs. Condiment, and some half dozen neighbors, remained gathered around the open trap-door, waiting, watching, and listening for what might next happen.

Presently one of the constables called out:

"Major Warfield, sir!"

"Well!" replied Old Hurricane.

"He's breathing still, sir; but seems badly hurt, and may be a-dying, seeing as he's unresponsible and unappealable. What shall we do along of him?"

"Bring him up! let's have a look at the fellow, at any rate!" exclaimed Old Hurricane, peremptorily.

"Just so, sir! but some of the gentlemen up there'll have to come down on the ladder and give a lift. He's dead weight now, I tell your honor!"

Several of the neighbors immediately volun-

teered for the service, and two of the strongest descended the ladder to lend their aid.

On attempting to move the injured man, he uttered a cry of pain, and fainted, and then it took the united strength and skill of four strong men to raise the huge insensible form of the athlete, and get him up the ladder. No doubt the motion greatly inflamed his inward wounds, but that could not be helped. They got him up at last, and laid out upon the floor, a ghastly, blood-stained, insensible form, around which every one gathered to gaze. While they were all looking upon him as upon a slaughtered wild beast, Capitola alone felt compassion.

"Uncle, he is quite crushed by his fall. Make the men lay him upon the bed. Never think of me; I shall never occupy this room again; its associations are too full of horrors. There, uncle, make them at once lay him upon the bed."

"I think the young lady is right, unless we mean to let the fellow die," said one of the neighbors.

"Very well! I have particular reasons of my own for wishing that the poor man's life should be spared until he could be brought to trial and induced to give up his accomplices," said Old Hurricane. Then turning to his ward, he said:

"Come along, Capitola. Mrs. Condiment will see that your effects are transferred to another apartment."

And you, friends," he continued, addressing the men present, "be so good, so soon as we have gone, as to undress that fellow and put him to bed, and examine his injuries while I send off for a physician; for I consider it very important that his life should be spared sufficiently long to enable him to give up his accomplices." And so saying, old Hurricane drew the arm of Capitola within his own and left the room.

It was noon before the physician arrived. When he had examined the patient, he pronounced him utterly unfit to be removed, as besides other serious contusions and bruises, his legs were broken and several of his ribs fractured.

In a word, it was several weeks before the strong constitution of the outlaw prevailed over his many injuries, and he was pronounced well enough to be taken before a magistrate and committed to prison to wait his trial. Alas! his life, it was said, was forfeit by an hundred crimes, and there could be no doubt as to his fate. He maintained a self-possessed, good-humored, and laughingly defiant manner, and when asked to give up his accomplices, he answered gaily:

"That treachery was a legal virtue which out-laws could not be expected to know anything about."

Capitola was everywhere lauded for her brave part in the capture of the famous desperado. But Cap. was so sincerely sorry for Black Donald to care for the applause.

CHAPTER XL

A FATAL HATRED.

"Oh, heaven and all its hosts, he shall die!"
"By Satan and his fiends, he shall not live!"
This is no transient flash of fugitive passion,—
His death has been my life for years of misery,
Which, else, I had not lived—
Upon that thought, and not on food, I fed;
Upon that thought, and not on sleep, I rested;
I came to do the deed that must be done—
Nor thou, nor the shortening angels could prevent me."

The United States army, under Gen. Scott, invested the City of Mexico.

A succession of splendid victories had marked every stage of their advance, from the sea-coast to the capital. Vera Cruz had fallen; Cerro Gordo had been stormed and passed; Xalapa taken; the glorious triumph of Churubusco had been achieved. The names of Scott, Worth, Wool, Quitman, Pillow, and others, were crowned with honor. Others, again, whose humble names and unnoticed heroism, has never been recorded, endured as nobly, suffered as patiently, and fought as bravely. Our own young hero, Herbert Greyson, had covered himself with honor.

The war with Mexico witnessed, perhaps, the most rapid promotions of any other in the whole history of military affairs.

The rapid ascent of our young officer was a striking instance of this. In two years from the time he had entered the service with a lieuten-

ant's commission, he held the rank of major in the—regiment of infantry.

Fortune had not so smiled upon our other young friend, Traverso Rocks; partly, because, being entirely out of his vocation, he had no right to expect success; but, mostly, because he had a powerful enemy in the colonel of his regiment—an unsleeping enemy, whose constant vigilance was directed to prevent his advancement, and insure the degradation and ruin of one whom he contemptuously termed the "gentleman private."

Now, it is known that, by the rules of military etiquette, a wide social gulf lies between the colonel of the regiment and the private in the ranks.

Yet Colonel Le Noir continually went out of his way to insult Private Rocks, hoping to provoke him to some act of fatal insubordination.

And very heavy was this trial to a high-spirited young man like Traverso Rocks; and very fortunate was it for him that he had early been imbued with that most important truth that "he who has his own spirit is greater than he who taketh a city."

But if Colonel Le Noir crossed the gulf of military etiquette to harass the poor young soldier, Major Greyson did the same thing for the more honorable purpose of soothing and encouraging him.

And both Herbert and Traverso hoped that the designs of their colonel would be still frustrated by the self-command and patience of the young private.

Alas! they did not know the great power of evil—they did not know that nothing less than Divine Providence could meet and overcome it.

They fondly believed that the malignity of Le Noir had resulted in no other practical evil than in preventing the young soldier's well-merited advancement, and in keeping him in the humble position of a private in the ranks.

They were not aware that the discharge of Traverso Rocks had long ago arrived, but that it had been suppressed through the diabolical cunning of Le Noir. That letters, messages and packets, sent by his friends to the young soldier, had found their way into his colonel's possession, and no further.

And so, believing the hatred of that bad man to have been fruitless of serious, practical evil, Herbert encouraged his friend to be patient for a short time longer, when they should see the end of the campaign, if not of the war.

It was now that period of suspense and of false truce, between the glorious 20th of August, and the equally glorious 8th of September, 1847—between the two most brilliant actions of the war, the battle of Churubusco and the storming of Chapultepec.

The General-in-chief of the United States forces in Mexico, was at his headquarters in the archiepiscopal palace of Tacubaya, on the suburbs, or in the full sight of the city of the Montezumas, awaiting the issue of the conference between the commissioners of the two hostile governments, met to arrange the terms of a treaty of peace—that every day grew more hopeless.

General Scott, who had had misgivings as to the good faith of the Mexicans, had now his suspicions confirmed by several breaches on the part of the enemy of the terms of the armistice.

Early in September, he despatched a letter to General Santa Anna, complaining of these infractions of the truce, and warning him, that if some satisfactory explanations were not made within forty-eight hours, he should consider the armistice at an end, and renew hostilities.

And, not to lose time, he began on the same night a series of reconnaissances, the object of which was to ascertain their best approach to the city of Mexico—which, in the event of the renewal of the war, he proposed to carry by assault.

It is not my intention to pretend to describe the siege and capture of the capital, which has been so often and eloquently described by grave and wise historians, but rather to follow the fortunes of an humble private in the ranks and relate the events of a certain court-martial, as I learned them from the after-dinner talk of a gallant officer, who had officiated on the occasion.

It was during these early days in September

that the illustrious General-in-chief was meditating one of the war by the assault of the city of Mexico, that Colonel Le Noir, also resolved to bring his own private party to an end, and ruin his enemy by a coup-de-main.

He had an efficient tool for his purpose, in the Captain of the company to which Traversé Roche belonged. This man, Captain Zuton, was a vulgar upstart, thrown into his command by the turbulence of war, as the sum is cast up to the surface by the boiling of the cauldron.

He hated Traversé Roche, for no conceivable reason, unless it was that the young private was a perfect contrast to himself, in the possession of a handsome person, a well cultivated mind, and a gentlemanly deportment,—cause sufficient for the antagonism of a mean and vulgar nature.

Colonel Le Noir was not slow to see, and to take advantage of his hatred.

And Captain Zuton became the willing co-adjutor and instrument of his vengeance. Between them they concocted a plot almost certain to bring the unfortunate young man to an ignominious death.

One morning, about the first of September, Major Greyson, in going his rounds, came upon Traversé, standing solitary near one of the outposts. The aspect of the young private was so pale, haggard and despairing, that his friend immediately stopped and exclaimed:

"Why, Traversé, how ill you look! more fitted for the sick list, than the sentry's duties. What the deuce is the matter?"

The young soldier touched his hat to his superior, and answered sadly, "I am ill, ill in body and mind, sir."

"Pooh!—leave off etiquette when we are alone, Traversé, and call me Herbert, as usual. Heaven knows I shall be glad when all this is over, and we fall back into our relative civil positions towards each other! But what is the matter now, Traversé?—Some of Le Noir's villainy again, of course."

"Of course! but I did not mean to complain, Herbert!—that were childish! I must endure this slavery, these insults and persecutions patiently, since I have brought them upon myself."

"Take comfort, Traversé! the war is drawing to a close. Either this armistice will end in a permanent peace, or when hostilities are renewed, our General will carry the city of Mexico by storm, and dictate the terms of a treaty from the grand square of the capital! In either event the war will soon be over, the troops disbanded, and the volunteers free to go about their business!—and Doctor Traversé Roche at liberty to pursue his legitimate profession," said Herbert, cheerfully.

"It may be so; I do not know. Oh, Herbert, whether it be from want of sleep, and excessive fatigue,—for I have been on duty for three days and nights,—or whether it be from incipient illness, or all these causes put together, I cannot tell, but my spirits are dreadfully depressed! There seems to be hanging over me a cloud of doom, and I cannot dispel! Every hour it seems descending lower and blacker over my head, until it feels like some heavy weight about to suffocate or crush me!" said Traversé, sadly.

"Pooh, pooh! hypochondria! Cheer up! I remember that in a month we shall probably be disbanded, and in a year,—think of it Traversé Roche!—Clara Day will be twenty-one, and at liberty to give you her hand! Cheer up!"

"Ah, Herbert! all that seems now to be more unsubstantial than the fabric of a dream! I cannot think of Clara or of my mother, without despair! For oh, Herbert! between me and them there seems to yawn a *dishonored grave*! Herbert, the talk, you know, of an attack on the Molino-del-Rey, and I almost *have* to fall in that charge!"

"Why?" inquired Major Greyson, in dismay.

"To escape being forced into a *dishonored grave*!" Herbert, that man has sworn my ruin, and he will accomplish it!" said Traversé, solemnly.

"For Heaven's sake, explain yourself!" said Herbert.

"I will! listen! I will tell you the history of the last three days," said Traversé; but before he could add another word, the sentry that was to relieve his guard, approached and said:

"Captain Zuton orders you to come to his tent instantly."

With a glance full of significance, Traversé bowed

to Herbert, and walked off, while the sentinel took his place.

Herbert saw no more of Traversé that day. At night he went to inquire for him, but learned that he had been sent with a reconnoitering party to the Molino-del-Rey.

The next day, on seeking for Traversé, he understood that the young private had been dispatched on a foraging expedition. That night, upon again inquiring for him, he was told that he had been sent in attendance upon the officer who had borne secret dispatches to General Quitman, at his quarters on the Acapulco road.

Traversé is right! They mean to ruin him! I see how it is exactly. When I saw Traversé on guard, two days ago, he looked like a man exhausted and craved for want of sleep; and since that time he has been night and day engaged in harassing duty! That demon, Le Noir, with Zuton to help him, has determined to keep Traversé from sleep, until nature is thoroughly exhausted, and then set him upon guard, that he may be found sleeping upon his post. That was what the boy meant, when he talked of the cloud that was hanging over him, and of being forced into a dishonored grave; and of being hoped, poor fellow, to fall in the approaching assault upon the Molino-del-Rey—I see it all now! They have decided upon the destruction of Traversé! He can do nothing; a soldier's whole duty is comprised in one word—obedience, even, if, as in this instance, he is ordered to commit suicide! Let them hatch their diabolical plots! We will see if the Lord does not still reign, and the devil is not a fool! It shall go hard, but that they are 'hoist with their own petard,' said Herbert, indignantly.

Early the next morning he went to the tent of Captain Zuton, and requested to see private Traversé Roche, in whom, he said he felt a warm interest.

The answer of Colonel Le Noir's tool confirmed Herbert's worst suspicions.

Touching his cap with an air of deference, he said:

"As you think so much of the young fellow, Major, I am very sorry to inform you, sir, that he is under arrest."

"Upon what charge?" inquired Herbert, calmly, concealing the suspicion and indignation of his bosom.

"Upon a rather bad one, Major—Sleeping on his post," replied the officer, making his exultation with a show of respect.

"Rather bad! the penalty is death," said Herbert, dryly.

"Yes, sir—martial law is rather severe."

"Who charges him?" asked Herbert, curiously.

"The Colonel of our regiment, sir," replied the man, scarcely able to conceal his triumph.

"An accusation from a high quarter. Is his charge supported by other testimony?"

"Beg your pardon, Major, but is that necessary?"

"You have answered my question by asking another one, sir. I will trouble you for a direct reply," said Herbert, with dignity.

"Then, Major, I must reply—Yes."

"What testimony? I would know the circumstances!"

"Well, sir, I will tell you all about it," said the officer, with ill-concealed triumph. "Private Traversé Roche had the early morning watch."

"—After his return from the night ride to Acapulco?"

"Yes, sir; well, Colonel Le Noir and myself, in going our rounds this morning, just before sunrise, came full upon the young fellow, fast asleep on his post. In fact, sir, it required a hearty shake to awaken him."

"After ninety-six hours' loss of sleep, I should not wonder!"

"I know nothing about that, sir; I only know that Colonel Le Noir and myself found him fast asleep on his post. He was immediately arrested."

"Where is he now?" inquired Herbert.

"In one of the Colonel's extra tents, under guard," replied the officer.

Herbert immediately went to the tent in question, where he found two sentinels, with loaded muskets, on duty before the door. They grounded arms, on the approach of their superior officer.

"Is Private Traversé Roche confined within there?" he inquired.

"Yes, sir."

"I must pass in to see him."

"I beg your pardon, sir; but our orders are strict, not even to admit an officer, without a written order from our Colonel," said the sentinel.

"Where is the Colonel?"

"In his tent, sir."

Herbert immediately went on to the fine marquee occupied by Colonel Le Noir.

The sentinel on duty there, at once admitted him, and he passed on into the presence of the Colonel.

He saluted his superior officer with cold military etiquette, and said:

"I have come, sir, to ask of you, an order to be admitted to see Private Traversé Roche, confined under the charge of sleeping on his post."

"I regret to say, Major Greyson, that it cannot be done," replied Le Noir, with ironical politeness.

"Will you have the kindness to inform me, sir, upon what pretext my reasonable request is refused?" asked Herbert, coldly.

"I deem it quite unnecessary to do so, sir," answered the Colonel, haughtily.

"Then, I have no more to do here," replied Herbert, leaving the tent.

He immediately threw himself into his saddle, and rode off to the Archbishop's palace of Taboyna, where the General-in-chief had fixed his head quarters.

Here he had to wait some little time before he was admitted to the presence of the gallant Commander, who received him with all the stately courtesy for which that renowned officer is distinguished.

Herbert mentioned the business that had brought him to the general's presence, the request of a written order to see a prisoner in strict confinement for sleeping on his post.

The Commander, whose kind heart was interested in the welfare of all his soldiers, made some inquiries into the affair, of which Herbert proceeded to give him a short history, without however, venturing, as yet, directly to charge the Captain or the Colonel with intentional foul play; indeed, to have attempted to criminate the superior officers of the accused man, would then have been most unwise, useless, and hurtful.

The general immediately wrote the desired order, and passed it to the young officer.

Herbert bowed, and was about to retire from the room, when he was called back by the general, who placed a packet of letters in his hand, saying that they had arrived among his dispatches, and were for the prisoner, to whom Major Greyson might as well take them at once.

Herbert received them with avidity, and on his way back to the colonel's tent, he examined their subscription.

There were three letters—all directed to Traversé Roche; on two of them, he recognised the familiar hand-writing of Maria Roche, on the other, he saw the delicate Italian style of a young lady's hand, which he readily believed to be that of Clara.

In the midst of his anxiety on his friend's account he rejoiced to have his one little ray of comfort to carry him. He knew that many months had elapsed since the young soldier had heard from his friends at home;—in truth, Traversé never received a letter unless it happened to come under order to Herbert Greyson. And well they both knew the reason.

"How very fortunate," said Herbert, as he rode on "that I happened to be at the general's quarters to receive these letters just when I did; for if they had been sent to Colonel Le Noir's quarters, or to Captain Z's, poor Traversé would never have heard of them. However, I shall not distract Traversé's attention by showing him these letters until he has told me the full history of his arrest, for I wish him to give me a cool account of the whole thing, so that I may know if I can possibly serve him. Ah, it is very unlikely that any power of mine will be able to save him, if indeed, and in truth, he *did* sleep upon his post," murmured Herbert, as he rode up to the tent where his prisoner was confined.

Another pair of sentinels were on duty in place of those who had refused him entrance.

He alighted from his horse, was challenged, showed his order, and passed into the tent.

There a sight met him that caused the tears to rush to his eyes—for the bravest is always the tenderest heart.

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thirteen officers, convened at Tacubaya, for the trial of Traverser Rooke, private in the— Regiment of Infantry, accused of sleeping on his post.

It was a sunny morning, early in September, and by seven o'clock the drum was heard beating before the Archbishopal palace, where it was understood the trial involving life or death, would come off.

The two sentinels on guard before the doors and a few officers off duty, loitering about the verandas, were the only persons visible near the well-ordered premises, until the members of the court-martial, with the prosecutors and witnesses, began to assemble and pass in.

Within a lofty apartment of the building, which was probably at one time the great dining-hall of the priests, were collected some twenty persons, comprising the court-martial and its attendants.

An extension table covered with green cloth occupied the middle of the long room.

At the head of this table sat General W., the president of the court. On his right and left, at the sides of the table, were arranged the other members according to their rank.

At a smaller table, near the right hand of the President, stood the Judge Advocate, or prosecutor on behalf of the United States.

At the door stood a sentinel on guard, and near him two or three orderly sergeants, in attendance upon the officers.

The Judge Advocate opened the court by calling over the names of the members, beginning with the President and ending with the youngest officer present, and recording them as they responded.

This preliminary settled, orders were dispatched to bring the prisoner, prosecutor and witnesses into court.

And in a few minutes entered Colonel Le Noir, Captain Zuten, Ensign Allen and Sergeant Baker. They were accommodated with seats near the left hand of the President.

Lastly, the prisoner was brought in, guarded, and placed standing at the foot of the table.

Traverser looked pale, from the severe effects of excessive fatigue and anxiety; but he deputed himself with firmness and dignity, bowed respectfully to the court and then drew his stately form up to its fullest height, and stood awaiting the proceedings.

The Judge Advocate, at the order of the President, commenced and read the warrant for holding the court. He then read over the names of the members, commencing as before, with the President, and descending through the gradations of rank to the youngest officer, and demanded of the prisoner whether he had any cause of challenge, or took any exception to any member present, and if so, to declare it, as was his privilege. Traverser lifted his noble head and keen eyes, and looked slowly around, in turn, upon each officer of the court-martial.

They might all be said to be strangers to him, since he knew them only by sight—all except his old acquaintance, Herbert Greyson, who sat first at the left hand of the President, and who returned his look of scrutiny with a gaze full of encouragement.

"I find no cause of challenge, and take no exception to any among the officers composing this court," answered Traverser, again bowing, with such sweetness and dignity in tone and gesture the officers, in surprise, looked—first at the prisoner, and then at each other. No one could doubt that the accused, in the humble garb of a private soldier, was nevertheless a man of education and refinement—a true man both in birth and breeding.

As no challenge was made, the judge-advocate proceeded to administer to each of the members of the court the oath prescribed by the Articles of War, to the intent that they should try "the matter before them, between the prisoner and the United States, according to the evidence, without fear, favor, or affection."

This oath was taken by each member holding up his right hand, and repeating the words after the officer.

The court then being regularly constituted, and every preliminary form observed, the judge-advocate arose and directed the prisoner to listen to the charge brought against him and preferred by the colonel of his regiment, Gabriel Le Noir.

Traverser raised his head and fixed his keen eyes upon the prosecutor, who stood before him, judge-advocate; while the latter, in a steady voice, read the accusation, charging the prisoner with wilful neglect of duty—in that he, Traverser Rooke, on the night of the first of September, having placed upon guard at the north-western outpost of the infantry quarters, at Tacubaya, did fall asleep upon his post, thereby endangering the safety of the quarters and violating the 46th Article of War.

To which charge the prisoner, in a firm voice, replied:

"Not guilty of wilful neglect of duty, though found sleeping upon my post."

The judge-advocate then cautioned all witnesses to withdraw from the court and come only as they were called. They withdrew; and he then arranged some preliminaries of the examination, and called in Capt. Zuten, of the—regiment of infantry.

The witness was a short, coarse-featured, red-haired person, of French extraction, without intellect enough to enable him to conceal the malignity of his nature.

He testified that on Thursday, the first of September, Traverser Rooke, private in his company, was ordered on guard at the north-western outpost of the quarters, between the hours of four and eight a. m. That about five o'clock on the same morning, he, Joseph Zuten, in making his usual rounds, and being accompanied on that occasion by Colonel Gabriel Le Noir, Lieutenant Adams, and Ensign Baker, did surprise Private Traverser Rooke asleep on his post, leaning against the sentry box with his musket at his feet.

This witness was cross-examined by the judge-advocate, who, it is known, combines in the person the office of prosecutor on the part of the United States and counsel for the prisoner—or, rather, if he be honest, he acts an impartial inquirer and arbitrator between the two.

As no new facts were gained by the cross-examination, the judge-advocate proceeded to call the next witness, Colonel Le Noir.

Here, then, was a gentleman of most prepossessing exterior, as well as of most irreproachable reputation!

In brief, his testimony corroborated that of the foregoing witness as to the finding of the prisoner asleep on his post at the time and place specified. In honor of his high social and military standing, this witness was not cross-examined.

The next called was Lieutenant Adams, who corroborated the evidence of former witness.

The last person examined was Ensign Baker, whose testimony corresponded exactly to that of all who had gone before him.

The Judge Advocate then briefly summed up the case on the part of the United States—first by reading the 46th Article of War, to wit, that:

"Any sentinel who shall be found sleeping on his post, or shall leave it before he shall be regularly relieved, shall suffer death," etc., etc., etc.

And secondly, by reading the recorded evidence to the effect that—

Traverser Rooke had been found by competent witness sleeping on his post.

And concluded by saying—

Gentlemen, officers of the court-martial, here is the law and here is the fact, both proven, and it remains for the court to find a verdict in accordance to both."

The prisoner was then put upon his defense.

Traverser Rooke drew himself up and said that, —the truth, like the blessed sun, must, on its shining forth, dispel all clouds of error; that trusting in the power of truth, he should briefly relate the history of the preceding seven days.

And then he commenced and narrated the facts with which the reader is already acquainted.

Traverser was interrupted several times in the course of his narrative by the President, General W., a severe martinet, who reminded him that an attempt to criminate his superior officers would be his cause before the court.

Traverser, bowing, as in duty bound, to the President at every fresh interruption, nevertheless proceeded straight on with his narrative to its conclusion.

The defense being closed, the Judge Advocate arose, as was his privilege, to have the last word. He stated that if the prisoner had been oppressed or aggrieved by his superior officer,

he lay in the 85th of the Articles of War, "that any soldier who shall feel himself aggrieved by his captain, shall complain thereof to the command of his regiment."

To this the prisoner begged to reply that he had considered the colonel of his regiment his personal enemy, and as such could have little hope of the issue, even if he had had opportunity afforded him, of appealing to that authority.

The Judge Advocate expressed his belief that this complaint was vexatious and groundless.

And here the evidence was closed, the prosecutor, the prisoner, and witness dismissed, and the court adjourned to deliberate with closed doors.

It was a period of awful suspense with Traverser Rooke. The prospect seemed dark for him.

The rigor of the offense, and the law affixing the penalty of death to that offense was established, and as the Judge Advocate truly said, nothing remained but for the court to find their verdict in accordance to both.

Extenuating circumstances there were certainly; but extenuating circumstances were seldom admitted in court-martial, the law and practice of which were severe, to the extent of cruelty.

Another circumstance against him, was the fact that it did not require an unanimous vote to render a legal verdict; but that if a majority of two-thirds should vote for conviction, the fate of the prisoner would be sealed. Traverser had but one friend in the court, and what could his single voice do against so many? Apparently nothing; yet, as the prisoner in leaving the court room, raised his eyes to that friend, Herbert Greyson returned the look with a glance of more than encouragement—of triumph!

CHAPTER LIII.

THE VERDICT.

We must not make a score-charge of the law, setting it up to frighten birds of prey. And let it keep one shape till custom makes it their perch, and not their terror. —SHAKESPEARE.

The members of the court-martial sit in the double capacity of jurors and judges; as jurors they find the facts, and as judges they award the punishment. Yet, in a session with closed doors was without the solemn formality that the initiated might have supposed to attend a grave deliberation upon a matter of guilt or innocence, involving a question of life or death.

As soon as the doors were closed that shut out the vulgar crowd, the "high and mighty" officials immediately fell into easy attitudes, and disengaged conversation upon the weather, the climate, yesterday's dinner at General Cushman's quarters, the claret, the cigars, and the Mexican signaturas.

They were presently recalled from this easy chat by the "demi," a severe disciplinarian, who reminded them of the gravity of the business upon which they were engaged.

The officer, who had wheeled themselves around in the chairs, crossed the table, and fell into order.

The Judge Advocate seated himself at the detached stand, opened his book, called the attention of the court, and commenced and read over the whole record of the evidence, and the proceedings up to this time.

The President then said:

"For my own part, gentlemen, I think this quite a simple matter, requiring but little deliberation. Here is the fact of the offense proved, and here is the law upon that offense clearly defined. Nothing seems to remain for us to do but to bring in a verdict in accordance with the law and the fact."

Several of the older officers and sterner disciplinarians agreed with the President, who now said:

"I move that the vote be immediately taken upon this question."

To this, also, the elder officers assented. And the Judge Advocate was preparing to take the ballot, when one of the junior members arose and said:

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Mr. President and gentlemen, there are mitigating circumstances attending this offence, which in my opinion should be duly weighed before making up our ballot."

"Lieutenant Lovel, when your hair has grown white in the service of your country, as mine has, and when your skin is mottled with the scars of a score of well-fought fields, you will find your soft theories corrected by hard experience, and you will know that in the case of a sentinel sleeping upon his post, there can be no mitigating circumstances; that nothing can palliate such flagrant and dangerous neglect, involving the safety of the whole army; a crime that martial law and custom has very necessarily made punishable with death," said the President, sternly.

The young lieutenant sat down abashed, under the impression that he had betrayed himself into some act of gross impropriety. This was his first appearance in the character of juror and judge; he was literally "unaccustomed to public speaking," and did not hazard a reply.

"For any other gentleman any views to advance, before we proceed to a general ballot?" inquired the President.

Several of the officers whispered together, and then some one replied that there seemed to be no reason why the vote should not be immediately taken.

Herbert Greyson remained perfectly silent. Why he did not speak then, in reply to this adjuration,—why, indeed, he had not spoken before, in support of Lieutenant Lovel's views in favor of his friend, I do not know to this day, though I mean to ask him the first time I have the opportunity. Perhaps he was inclined to dramatic effects; but whatever might have been the motive, he continued silent, offering no obstacle to the immediate taking of the vote.

The Judge-Advocate then called the court to order for the taking of the ballot, and proceeded to question the members in turn, commencing with the youngest.

"How say you Lieutenant Lovel, is the prisoner on trial guilty or not guilty of the offence laid in his charge?"

"Guilty," responded the young officer, as his eyes filled with tears of pity for the other young liege, against which he had felt obliged to record his vote.

"If that is the opinion of one who seems friendly to him, what will be the votes of the other stern judges?" said Herbert Greyson to himself, in dismay.

What say you, Lieutenant Adams—is the prisoner guilty or not guilty?" said the Judge-Advocate, proceeding with the ballot.

"Guilty!"

"Lieutenant Cragin?"

"Guilty!"

"Lieutenant Evans?"

"Guilty!"

"Lieutenant Goffe?"

"Guilty!"

"Lieutenant Heese?"

"Guilty!"

"Captain Kingsley?"

"Guilty!"

"Captain McConkey?"

"Guilty!"

"Captain Lucas?"

"Guilty!"

"Captain O'Donnely?"

"Guilty!"

"Captain Rosencrans?"

"Guilty!"

"Major Greyson?"

"NOT GUILTY!"

Every officer sprang to his feet and gazed in astonishment, consternation and indignant inquiry upon the reader of this unprecedented vote.

The President was the first to speak, breaking out with: "Sir! Major Greyson! your vote, sir, in direct defiance of the fact and the law upon it, is unprecedented, sir, in the whole history of court-martial."

"I record it as uttered, nevertheless," replied Herbert.

"And your oath, sir! what becomes of your oath as a judge of this court?"

"I regard my oath in my vote!"

"What, sir," inquired Captain McConkey, "do you mean to say that you have rendered

that vote in accordance with the facts elicited in evidence, as by your oath you were bound to do?"

"Yes."

"How, sir! do you mean to say that the prisoner did not sleep on his post?"

"Certainly I do not; on the contrary, I grant that he did sleep upon his post, and yet I maintain that in doing so, he was not guilty."

"Major Greyson plays with us?" said the President.

"By no means, sir! I never was in more solemn earnest than at present! Your honor, the President, and gentlemen judges of the court, as I am not counsel for the prisoner, nor civil officer, nor lawyer, of whose interference court-martial are proverbially jealous, I beg you will permit me to say a few words in support, or at least, I will say, in explanation of the vote which you have characterized as an opinion in opposition to fact and law, and unprecedented in the whole history of court-martial."

"Yes it is! it is!" said General W., shifting uneasily in his seat.

"I heard the defence of the prisoner," continued Herbert; "you heard the narrative of his wrongs and sufferings, to the truth of which his every aspect bears testimony. I will not here express a judgment as to the motives that prompted his superior officers, I will merely advert to the facts themselves, in this soldier, under the circumstances, could not, with his human power, have done otherwise than he did."

"Sir, if the prisoner considered himself wronged by his captain, which is very doubtful, he could have appealed to the colonel of his regiment."

"Sir, the articles of war accord him that privilege. But is it ever taken advantage of? Is there a case on record where a private soldier ventures to make a dangerous enemy of his immediate superior by complaining of his captain to his colonel. Nor in this case would it have been of the least use, inasmuch as this soldier had well-founded reasons for believing the colonel of his regiment his personal enemy, and the captain as the instrument of this enmity."

"And you, Major Greyson, do you coincide in opinion of the prisoner? Do you think that there could have been anything in common between the colonel of the regiment and the poor private in the ranks, to again such an equal treatment as enmity?" inquired Captain O'Donnely.

"I answer distinctly, yes, sir! In the first place, this poor private is a young gentleman of birth and education, the heir of one of the most important estates in Virginia, and the betrothed of one of the most lovely girls in the world. In both these capacities he has stood in the way of Colonel Le Noir, standing between him and the estate on the one hand, and between him and the young lady on the other. He has disappointed Le Noir both in love and ambition. And he has thereby made an enemy of the man who has besides the nearest interest in his destruction. Gentlemen, what I say now in the absence of Colonel Le Noir, I am prepared to repeat in his presence, and maintain at the proper time and place."

"But how came this young gentleman of birth and expectations to be found in the ranks?" inquired Captain Rosencrans.

"How came we to have headstrong sons of wealthy parents, fast young men of fortune, and runaway students from the universities and colleges of the United States, in our ranks! In a burst of boyish impetuosity the young man enlisted. Destiny gave him as the colonel of his regiment his mortal enemy. Colonel Le Noir found in Captain Zutea a ready instrument for his malignity. And between them both they have done all that could possibly be effected to defeat the good fortune and insure the destruction of Traversed Bookes. And I repeat, gentlemen, that what I feel constrained to affirm here in the absence of those officers, I shall assuredly repeat and maintain in their presence upon the proper occasion. In fact, I shall bring formal charges against Colonel Le Noir and Captain Zutea, of conduct unworthy of officers and gentlemen!"

"But it seems to me that this is not directly to the point at issue," said Captain Kingsley.

"On the contrary, sir, it is the point, the whole point, and only point, as you shall presently see, by attending to the facts that I shall recall to your memory. You and all present must, then, see that there was a deliberate purpose to effect the ruin of this young man. He is accused of having been found sleeping on his post, the penalty of which, in time of war, is death. Now listen to the history of the days that preceded his fault, and tell me if human nature could have withstood the trial?"

"Sunday night was the last of repose to the prisoner until Friday morning, when he was found asleep on his post."

"Monday night he was sent with the reconnoitering party to Casa-de-Mata."

"Tuesday he was sent with the officer that carried our General's expostulation to Santa Anna. At night he was put on guard."

"Wednesday he was sent with another party to protect a band of emigrants crossing the marshes. At night he was sent with all and the party to reconnoiter Molino-Hoy."

"Thursday he was sent in attendance upon the officer that carried despatches to General Quitman, and did not return until midnight, when, thoroughly worn out, driven indeed to the extreme degree of mortal endurance, he was again, on a sultry, oppressive night, in a still, solitary place, set on guard; where a few hours later he was found asleep upon his post—by whom?—the colonel of his regiment and the captain of his company, who seemed bent upon his ruin!—as I hold myself bound to establish before another court-martial."

"This result has been intended from the first! If four nights' loss of sleep would not have effected this, fifteen probably would; if fifteen would not, thirty would; or if thirty would not, sixty would!—and all this Captain Zutea had the power to enforce until his doomed victim should fall into the hands of the provost-marshal and into the arms of death!"

"And now, gentlemen, in view of all these circumstances, I ask you—Was Traversed Bookes guilty of wilful neglect of duty in dropping asleep on his post? And I move for a reconsideration, and a new ballot!"

"Such a thing is without precedent, sir! These mitigating circumstances may be brought to bear on the Commander-in-Chief, and may be embodied in a recommendation to mercy; they should have no weight in the finding of the verdict," said the President, "which should be in accordance with the fact and the law."

"And with justice and humanity! to find a verdict of guilty against this young man would be to place an unmerited brand upon his spotless name, that no after leniency of the Executive could wipe out! Gentlemen, will you do this? Not I am sure that you will not! And again I move for a new ballot!"

"I second the motion!" said Lieutenant Lovel, rising quite encouraged to believe in his own first instincts, which had been so favorable.

"Gentlemen," said the President, sternly, "this thing is without precedent! In all the annals of court-martial, without precedent!"

"Then, if there is no such precedent, it is quite time that such a one were established! so that the iron car of literal law should not always roll over and crush justice! Gentlemen, shall we have a new ballot?"

"Yes! yes! yes! yes!" were the answers.

"It is irregular! it is illegal! it is unprecedented! a new ballot! never heard of such a thing in forty years of military life! Lord bless my soul, what is the service coming to!"

"A new ballot! a new ballot! a new ballot!" was the unanimous cry.

The President groaned in spirit, and recorded a vow never to forgive Herbert Greyson for this departure from routine.

The new ballot demanded by acclamation had to be held.

The Judge-Advocate called the court to order and began anew. The votes were taken as before, commencing with the young lieutenant, who now responded sonorously:

"NOT GUILTY!"

And so it ran round the entire circle. "Not guilty!" "Not guilty!" "Not guilty!" were the hearty responses of the court.

The acquittal was unanimous. The verdict was recorded.

The doors were then thrown open to the public, and the prisoner called in and publicly discharged from custody.

The count then adjourned.

Traverse looked himself upon the bosom of his friend, exclaiming in a broken voice:

"I cannot sufficiently thank you! My dear mother and Clara will do that!"

"Nonsense," said Herbert, laughing; "didn't I tell you that the Lord reigns, and the devil is a fool? This is only the beginning of victories!"

CHAPTER LIV.

THE END OF THE WAR.

Now are our brows bound with victorious wreaths,
Our bruised arms hung up for monuments;
Our stern alarms changed to merry meetings,
Our doubtful marches to delightful marches.
Drum-viols war hath smoothed his wrinkles front,
And now, instead of mounting barbed steeds,
He capers nimbly in a lady's chamber,
To the lascivious pleasing of a lute.—SHAKESPEARE.

Ten days later Molino-del-Rey, Casa-de-Mata and Chapultepec had fallen. The United States forces occupied the city of Mexico. General Scott was in the Grand Plaza, and the American standard waved above the capital of the Mexicans!

Let those who have a taste for swords and muskets, drums and trumpets, blood and fire, describe the desperate battles and splendid victories that led to this final magnificent triumph!

My business lies with the persons of our story, to illustrate whom I must pick out a few isolated instances of heroism in this glorious campaign.

Herbert Greyson's division was a portion of the gallant Eleventh that charged the Mexican batteries on Molino-del-Rey. He covered his name with glory, and qualified himself to merit the command of his regiment, which he afterwards received.

Traverse looked like a young Paladin. When they were marching into the very mouths of the cannon that were vomiting fire upon them, and when the young ensign of his company was struck down before him, Traverse looked the colors from his falling hand, and crying "Victory!" pressed onwards and upwards over the dead and the dying, and springing upon one of the guns which continued to belch forth fire, he thrice waved the flag over his head, and then he planted it upon the battery! Captain Zuteu fell in the subsequent assault upon Chapultepec.

Colonel Le Noir entered the city of Mexico with the victorious army, but on the subsequent day, being engaged in a street skirmish with the leprous or liberated convicts, he fell mortally wounded by a copper bullet, and he was now dying by inches at his quarters near the Grand Cathedral.

It was on the evening of the 30th of September, six days from the triumphant entry of General Scott into the capital, that Major Greyson was seated at supper at his quarters, with some of his brother officers, when an orderly entered and handed a note to Herbert, which proved to be a communication from the surgeon of their regiment, begging him to repair without delay to the quarters of Colonel Le Noir, who, being in extremity, desired to see him.

Major Greyson immediately excused himself to his company, and repaired to the quarters of the dying man.

He found Colonel Le Noir stretched upon his bed, in a state of extreme exhaustion, and attended by the surgeon and chaplain of his regiment.

As Herbert advanced to the side of his bed, Le Noir stretched out his pale hand, and said:

"You bear no grudge against a dying man, Greyson?"

"Certainly not," said Herbert; especially when he purposes doing the right thing, as I judge you do, from the fact of your sending for me."

"Yes, I do, I do," replied Le Noir, pressing the hand that Herbert's kindness of heart could not withhold.

Le Noir then beckoned the minister to hand

him two sealed packets, which he took and laid upon the bed before him.

Then taking up the larger of the two packets, he placed it in the hands of Herbert Greyson, saying:

"There, Greyson, I wish you to hand that to your friend, young Rocks, who has received his colors, I understand?"

"Yes; he has now the rank of ensign."

Then give this parcel into the hands of Ensign Rocks, with the request, that being freely yielded up, they may not be used in any manner to harass the last hours of a dying man."

"I promise on the part of my noble young friend, that they shall not be so used," said Herbert, as he took possession of the parcel.

Le Noir then took up the second packet, which was much smaller, but much more firmly secured, than the first, being an envelope of parchment, sealed with three great seals.

Le Noir held it in his hand for a moment, gazing from the surgeon to the chaplain, and thence down upon the mysterious packet, while spasms of pain convulsed his countenance. At length he spoke.

"This second packet, Greyson, contains a well, I may as well call it a narrative. I confide it to your care upon these conditions—that it shall not be opened until after my death and funeral, and that when it has served its purpose of restitution, it may be, as far as possible, forgotten. Will you promise me this?"

"On my honor, yes," responded the young man, as he received the second parcel.

"That is all I have to say, except this—that you account to me upon every account, the most proper person to whom I could confide this trust. I thank you for accepting it; and I believe that I may safely promise that you will find the contents of the smaller packet of great importance and advantage to yourself and those dear to you."

Herbert bowed in silence.

"That is all. Good bye. I wish now to be alone with our chaplain," said Colonel Le Noir, extending his hand.

Herbert pressed that wasted hand; silently sent up a prayer for the dying wrong-doer; bowed gravely, and withdrew.

It was almost eight o'clock, and Herbert thought that he would scarcely have time to find Traverse before the drum should beat to quarters.

He was more fortunate than he had anticipated; for he had scarcely turned the Grand Cathedral, when he came full upon the young ensign.

Ah! Traverse, I am very glad to meet you! I was just going to look for you. Come immediately to my rooms, for I have a very important communication to make to you! Colonel Le Noir is supposed to be dying. He has given me a parcel to be handed to you, which I shrewdly suspect to contain your intercepted correspondence for the last two years," said Herbert.

Traverse stared and gazed upon his friend in amazement, and was about to express his astonishment, when Herbert, seeing others approach, drew the arm of his friend within his own, and they hurried silently on toward Major Greyson's quarters.

They had scarcely got in, and closed the door, and withdrawn a light, before Traverse exclaimed, impatiently:

"Give it me!" and almost snatched the parcel from Herbert's hands.

"What! I don't be impatient. I dare say it is all state news!" said Herbert, as he yielded up the prize.

They sat down together, on each side a little stand supporting a light.

Herbert watched with sympathetic interest while Traverse tore open the envelope and examined its contents.

They were, as Herbert had anticipated, letters from the mother and the betrothed of Traverse—letters that had arrived and been intercepted, from time to time, for the preceding two years.

There were blanks, also, directed in a hand strange to Traverse, but familiar to Herbert as that of Old Hurricane; and those blanks enclosed draughts upon a New Orleans bank, payable to the order of Traverse Rocks.

Traverse pushed all these letters aside with scarcely a glance and not a word of inquiry, and began eagerly to examine the long-desired, long-withheld letters from the dear ones at home.

His cheek flamed to see that every seal was broken, and the frail bosoms of every heart-broken word inhaled by others, before they reached himself!

"Look here, Herbert! look here! is not this incredible? Every fond word of my mother, every delicate and sacred expression of regard from Clara, all read by the profane eyes of that man!"

"That man is on his death-bed, Traverse, and you must forgive him! He has restored your letters."

"Yes, after their sacred privacy has been profaned! Oh!"

Traverse handed his mother's letters over to Herbert, that her foster son might read them, but Clara's "sacred epistles" were kept to himself.

"What are you laughing at?" inquired Traverse, looking up from his page and, detecting Herbert with a smile upon his face.

"I am thinking that you are not as generous as you were some few years since, when you would have given me Clara herself; for now you will not even let me have a glimpse of her letters!"

"Have they not been already sufficiently published?" said Traverse, with an almost girlish smile and blush.

When those cherished letters were all read and put away, Traverse stooped down and "fished up" from amidst envelopes, strings and waste paper, another set of letters, which proved to be blanks enclosing the checks, of various dates, which Herbert recognised as coming anonymous-ly from Old Hurricane.

"What in the world is the meaning of all this Herbert? Have I a nabob uncle turned up anywhere, do you think? Look here!—a hundred dollars—and a fifty, and another—all draughts upon the Planters' Bank, New Orleans, drawn in my favour and signed by Largent & Dor, Bankers—I, that haven't had five dollars at a time to call my own for the last two years! Here, Herbert, give me a good sharp pinch to wake me up! I may be sleeping on my post again!" said Traverse, in perplexity.

"You are not sleeping, Traverse!"

"Are you sure?"

"Perfectly," replied Herbert, laughing.

"Well, then, do you think that crack upon the crown of my head that I got upon Chapultepec has not injured my intellect?"

"Not in the slightest degree!" said Herbert, still laughing at his friend's perplexity.

"Then I am a hero of a fairy tale, that is all—a fairy tale in which waste paper is changed into bank notes, and private soldiers prince-paladins! Look here!" cried Traverse, desperately, thrusting the bank cheques under the nose of his friend; "do you see those things and know what they are, and will you tell me everything in this castle don't go by enchantment?"

"Yes, I see what they are, and it seems to me perfectly natural that you should have them!"

"Humph!" said Traverse, looking at Herbert with an expression that seemed to say that he thought the wit of his friend deranged.

"Traverse," said Major Greyson, did it never occur to you, that you must have other relatives in the world besides your mother? Well, I suspect that those checks were sent by some relative of yours or your mother's, who just begins to remember that he has been neglecting you!"

"Herbert, do you know this?" inquired Traverse, anxiously.

"No, I do not know it; I only suspect this to be the case," said Herbert, evasively.

"What is that which you are forgetting?"

"Oh! this—yes, I had forgotten it. Let us see what it is!" said Traverse, examining a paper that had rested wearily upon the bed.

"This is an order for my discharge, signed by the Secretary of War, and dated—hark!—two years ago! Here I have been serving two years illegally, and if I had been convicted of neglect of duty in sleeping on my post, I should have been

well, as that man, when he prosecuted me, knew perfectly well," exclaimed Traverse.

"That man, as I said before, Herbert, upon his death-bed! Remember nothing against him!"

But that order for a discharge—now that you are in the way of promotion and the war is over—will you take advantage of it?"

"Decidedly, yes! for though I am said to have acquitted myself passably well at Chapultepec

gloriously."

"Yet, for to break men's broken!—not to them when even please Providence (General Butler).

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"Gloriously, Traverse! You won your colors gloriously!"

"Yet, for all that, my true mission is not to break men's bones, but to set them when broken!—not to take men's lives, but to save them when endangered. So, to-morrow morning, please Providence, I shall present this order to General Butler, and apply for my discharge."

"The face of Traverse suddenly changed. "I should like to do so! Oh, how I should like to see my dear mother and Clara, if only for a day; but I must not indulge the longing of my heart. I must not go home until I can do so with honor."

"And can you not do so now? You, who have triumphed over all your personal enemies, and won your colors at Chapultepec?"

"No, for all this was in my legitimate profession! Nor will I present myself at home until, by the blessing of the Lord, I have done what I set out to do, and establish myself in a good practice. And so, by the help of Heaven! I hope within one week to be on my way to New Orleans to try my fortune in that city."

"To New Orleans!—and a new, malignant fever, of some horrible, unknown type, raging there," exclaimed Herbert. "So much the more need of a physician! Herbert, I am not the least uneasy on the subject of infection! I have a theory for its annihilation."

"I never saw a clever young professional man without a theory!" laughed Herbert.

The drum was now beating the tattoo, and the friends separated with hearts full of revived hope.

The next morning Traverse presented the order of the secretary to the commander-in-chief, and received his discharge.

And then, after writing long, loving, and hopeful letters to his mother and his betrothed, and entrusting the former to try and find out who was the secret benefactor who had sent him such timely aid, Traverse took leave of his friends, and set out for the Southern Queen of Cities, once more to seek his fortune.

Meanwhile the United States Army continued to occupy the City of Mexico, through the whole of the autumn and the winter.

General Butler, who temporarily succeeded the illustrious Scott in the chief command, very wisely arranged the terms of an armistice with the enemy, that was intended to last two months from the beginning of February; but which happily lasted only the conclusion of the treaty of peace between the two countries.

Colonel Le Noir had not been destined soon to die; his wound, an inward cancer from a copper bullet, that the surgeon had at length succeeded in extracting—looked the form of a chronic fever disease. Since the night upon which he had been so extremely ill, as to be supposed dying, and yet had rallied, the doctors felt no apprehensions of his speedy death, though they gave no hopes of his final recovery.

Under those circumstances, there were hours in which Le Noir bitterly regretted his precipitation in permitting those important documents to go out of his own hands. And he frequently sent for Herbert Greyson in private to require re-assurances that he would not open the packet confided to him before the occurrence of the event specified.

And Herbert always soothed the sufferer by reiterating his promise that so long as Colonel Le Noir should survive, the seal of that packet should not be broken.

Beyond the suspicion that the parcel contained an important confession, Herbert Greyson was entirely ignorant of its contents.

But the life of Gabriel Le Noir was prolonged beyond all human calculus of probabilities.

He was spared to experience a more effectual repentance than that spurious one into which he had been frightened by the seeming rapid approach of death.

And after seven months of lingering illness and gradual decline, during the latter portion of which he was comforted by the society of his only son, who had come at his summons to visit him, in May, 1848, Gabriel Le Noir expired a sincere penitent, reconciled to God and man.

And soon afterwards, in the month of May, the treaty of peace having been ratified by the Mexican Congress at Queretaro, the American army evacuated the city and territory of Mexico.

And our brave soldiers, their "brows crowned with victorious wreaths," set out upon their return to home and friends.

CHAPTER LV.

THE FORTUNATE DAY.

Howan has to all allotted, soon or late, Some lucky revelation of their fate; Whose motions if we watch and guide with skill For human good depend on human will. Our fortune rolls as from a smooth descent, And from the first impetuous slope its bent, Now, now she meets you with a glorious prize, And spreads her looks before her as she flies.

—DANTE.

Meanwhile, what had our young adventurer been doing in all these months between September

Traverse, with his two hundred dollars, had set out for New Orleans about the first of October.

But by the time he had paid his travelling expenses and fitted himself out with a respectable suit of professional black, and a few necessary books, his little capital had diminished three quarters.

So that when he found himself settled in his new office in a highly respectable quarter of the city, he had but fifty dollars and a few dimes left.

A portion of this sum was expended in a cheap self-bested, a closed washstand, and a spirit-lamp coffee-boiler, for Traverse determined to lodge in his office and board himself,—which will have this additional advantage," said the cheerful fellow to himself—"for besides saving me from debt, it will keep me always on hand for calls."

The fever, though it was October, had scarcely abated; indeed, on the contrary, it seemed to have revived and increased in virulence in consequence of the premature return of many people who had fled on its first appearance, and who in coming back too soon to the infected atmosphere, were less able to withstand contagion than those who remained.

That Traverse escaped the plague was owing not so much to his favorite "theory" as to his vigorous constitution, pure blood, and regular habits of temperance, cleanliness, and cheerful activity of mind and body.

Just then the demand was greater than the supply of medical service. Traverse found plenty to do. And his pleasant young face and hopeful and confident manners won him great favor in sick-rooms, where, whether it were he subscribed for "theory," his "practice," or to the happy influence of his personal presence, or to all these together, with the blessing of the Lord upon them,—it is certain that he was very successful in raising the sick. It is true that he did not earn five dollars in as many days; for by his practice, like that of almost every young professional man, was among the indigent.

But what of that?—what if he were not running up heavy accounts against wealthy patrons?—he was "giving to the poor"—not money, for himself as poor as any of them—but his time, labor and professional skill! he "was giving to the poor" as "lending to the Lord," and to "liking the security." And the most successful speculator that ever made a fortune on 'Change, never, never invested time, and labor or money to a surer advantage.

And this I would say for the encouragement of all young persons in similar circumstances—do not be impatient if the "returns" are a little while delayed, for they are sure, and so rich that they are quite worth waiting for, nor will the waiting be long. Give your services cheerfully, also, for "the Lord loveth a cheerful giver."

Traverse managed to keep out of debt; he regularly paid his office-rent and his landlady's bill; he daily purchased his mutton-chop or pound of beefsteak, and broiled it himself; he made his coffee; swept and dusted his office; put up his sofa-bed; blacked his boots; and oh! miracle of independence, he mended his own gloves and sewed on his own shirt-buttons—for you may depend that the widow's son knew how to do all these things; nor was there a bit of hardship in his having to wait upon himself, though if his mother and Clara, in their well-provided and comfortable home at Willow Heights, had only known how

destitute the young man was of female aid and comfort, how they would have cried!

"No one but himself to mend his poor dear gloves! Oh—oh, too-boo-co!"

Traverse never alluded to his straitened circumstances; but boasted of the comfort of his quarters and the extent of his practice, and declared that his income already exceeded his outlay; which was perfectly true, since he was resolved to live within it, whatever it might be.

As the fever began to subside, Traverse's practice declined, and about the middle of November his "occupation was gone."

We said that his office was in the most respectable locality in the city; it was, in fact, on the ground floor of a first-class hotel.

It happened that one night, near the close of winter, Traverse lay awake on his soft-bedstead, turning over in his mind how he should contrive to make both ends meet at the conclusion of the present term, and feeling as near despondency as it was possible for his buoyant and trust-trusting soul to be, when there came a loud ringing at his office-bell.

This reminded him of the stirring days and nights of the preceding autumn. He started up at once to answer the summons.

"Who's there?"

"Is Doctor Rocks in?"

"Yes, what's wanted?"

"A gentleman, sir, in the house here, sir, taken very bad, wants the doctor directly, room number 555."

"Very well, I will be with the gentleman immediately," answered Traverse, plunging his head into a basin of cold water and drying it hastily.

In five minutes Traverse was in the office of the hotel, inquiring for a waiter to show him up into 555.

One was ordered to attend him, who led the way up several flights of stairs, and around divers galleries, until he opened a door and ushered the doctor immediately into the sick room.

There was a little, old, dried-up Frenchman in a blue night-cap, extended on a bed in the middle of the room, and covered with a white counterpane that clung close to his rigid form as to a corpse.

And there was a little, old, dried-up Frenchwoman in a brown memento gown and a high-crowned muslin cap, who hopped and chattered about the bed like a frightened magpie.

"On! Monsieur le Docteur!" she screamed, jumping at Traverse in a way to make him start back; "Où, Monsieur le Docteur! I am very happy you to see! Voilà mon frere! Behold my brother! Is ill! he is vera ill! he is dead! he is vera dead!"

"I hope not," said Traverse, approaching the bed.

"Voilà! Behold! Mon Dieu, he is vera still! he is vera cold! he is vera dead! what can you, mon frere, my brother to save?"

"Be composed, Madam, if you please, and allow me to examine my patient," said Traverse taking the wrist of the sick man.

"Ma foi! I know not what you speak! compose. What can you my brother to save?"

"Much, I hope, Madam, you must leave me to examine my patient and not interrupt me," said Traverse, passing his hand over the naked chest of the sick man.

"Mon Dieu! I know not 'exam' and interrupt! I know not what can you mon frere to save!"

"If you don't hush parley-voicing, the doctor can't nothink, mum," said the waiter, in a respectful tone.

Traverse found his patient in a bad condition—in a stupor, if not in a state of positive insensibility. The surface of his body was cold as ice, and apparently without the least vitality. If he was not, as his sister had expressed it, "very dead," he was certainly "next to it."

By close questioning, and by putting his questions in various forms, the doctor learned from the chattering little magpie of a Frenchwoman that the patient had been ill for nine days; that he had been under the care of Monsieur le Docteur Carrière; that there had been a consultation of physicians; that they had prescribed for him and given him over; that le Docteur Carrière still attended him, but was at this instant in a danger, as accoutre to a lady in extreme danger, whom he could not leave; but Docteur

Carriere had directed them, in his unavoidable absence, to call in the skilful, the talented, the soon to be illustrious young Docteur Roce, who was also near at hand.

The heart of Traverso thrilled with joy. The Lord had remembered him. His best skill spent upon the poor and needy who could make him no return, but whose lives he had succeeded in saving, had reached the ears of the celebrated Dr. C., who had with the unobtrusive magnanimity of real genius, quietly recommended him to his own patrons.

Oh! well, he would do his very best, not only to advance his own professional interests, and to please his mother and Clara, but also to do honor to the magnanimous Doctor C.'s recommendation.

Here, too, was an opportunity of putting in practice his favorite theory; but first of all, it was necessary to be informed of the preceding mode of treatment and its results.

So he further questioned the little, restless mapple, and by ingeniously framed inquiries, succeeded in gaining from her the necessary knowledge of the patient's antecedents. He examined all the medicines that had been used, and informed himself of their effects upon the disease. But the most serious difficulty of all, seemed to be, the impossibility of raising vital action upon the cold, lead skin.

The chattering little woman informed him that the patient had been covered with blisters that would not "pull," that would not "de-climate," that would not, what you call it—"draw!"

Traverso could easily believe this, for not only the skin, but the very flesh of the old Frenchman seemed bloodless and lifeless.

Now for his theory! what would kill a healthy man with perfect circulation, might save the life of this dying one, whose whole surface, inch deep, seemed already dead.

"Put him in a bath of mustard-water, as hot as you can bear your own land in, and continue to raise the temperature slowly, watching the effect, for about five minutes. I will go down and prepare a social draught to be taken the moment he gets back to bed," said Doctor Roce, who immediately left the room.

His directions were all but too well obeyed. The bathing-tub was quickly brought into the chamber and filled with water, as hot as the nurse could bear her hand in. Then the invalid was hastily invested in a slight bathing-gown and lifted by two servants and laid in the hot bath.

"Now, bring quickly, water boiling," said the little, old woman, imperatively. And when a large copper kettle full was forthcoming, she took it and began to pour a stream of hissing, bubbling water in at the foot of the bath.

The skin of the torpid patient had been reddening for a few seconds, so as to prove that its sensibility was returning, and now when the steam from the kettle began to mix with the already very hot bath, and to raise its temperature almost to boiling, suddenly there was heard a cry from the bath, and the patient, with the agility of youth and health, skipped out of the tub and into his bed, kicking vigorously, and exclaiming:

"Brigandage! assassins! you have scalded my legs to death!"

"Glorie be to the Lord! he's saved!" cried one of the waiters, a devout Irishman.

"Ciel! no speak! he moves! he lives! *mon frere!*" cried the little Frenchwoman, going to him.

"Ah, murderers! bandits! you've scalded me to death! I'll have you all before the commissaire!"

"He scold! he threatens! he swears! he gets well! *mon frere!*" cried the old woman, busy herself to change his clothes and put on his flannel night gown. They then tucked him up warmly in bed, and put bottles of hot water all around, to keep up this newly stimulated circulation.

At that moment Dr. Roce came in, put his hand into the bath-tub, and could scarcely repress a cry of pain and of horror—the water scalded his fingers! what must it have done to the sick man!

"Good heaven, Madam! I did not tell you to par-boil your patient!" exclaimed Traverso, speaking to the old woman. Traverso was shocked

ed to find how perilously his orders had been executed.

"*Eh bien, Monsieur!* he lives! he does well! *Voila mon frere!*" exclaimed the little old woman.

It was true! the accidental "boiling bath," as it might also be called, had effected what perhaps no other means in the world could—a restored circulation.

The disease was broken up, and the convalescence of the patient was rapid. And as Traverso kept his own secret concerning the accidental high temperature of that bath, which every one considered a fearful and a successful experiment, the fame of Dr. Roce spread over the whole city and country.

He would soon have made a fortune in New Orleans, had not the hand of destiny beckoned him elsewhere. It happened thus:

The old Frenchman whose life Traverso had partly by accident and wholly by design succeeded in saving, comprehended perfectly well how narrow his escape from death had been, and attributed his restoration solely to the genius, skill, and boldness of his young physician, and was grateful accordingly with all a Frenchman's noisy demonstration.

He called Traverso his friend, his deliverer, his son!

One day, as soon as he found himself strong enough to think of pursuing his journey, he called his "son" into the room and explained to him that he, Doctor Pierre St. Jean, was the proprietor of a private *Asylum*, very exclusive, very quiet, very aristocratic, indeed, receiving none but patients of the highest rank; that this retreat was situated on the wooded banks of a charming lake in one of the most healthy and beautiful neighborhoods of East Feliciana; that he had originally come down to the city to engage the services of some young physician of talent as his assistant, and finally, that he would be delighted to entrust to him "his deliverer! his friend! his son!" would accept the post.

Now, Traverso particularly wished to study the various phases of mental derangement, a department of his professional education that had hitherto been opened to him only through books.

He explained this to his old friend, the French physician, who immediately went off in ecstatic exclamations of joy as, "Good! Great! Grand!" and "I shall now re- my good child! my dear son! for his so fortunate skill!"

The terms of the engagement were soon arranged, and Traverso prepared to accompany his new friend to his "beautiful retreat," the private mad-house. But first Traverso wrote to his mother and Clara in Virginia, and also to Herbert Greyson in Mexico, to apprise them of his good fortune.

CHAPTER LVI.

THE MYSTERIOUS MANIAC.

Stay, Jailer, stay, and hear my woe:

She is not mad who kneels to thee,

For what I am well I know,

And what I was, and what should be;

I'll rave no more in proud despair;

My language shall be calm the mad;

But yet I'll tell thee deadly swears,

I am not mad! no, no, not mad!

—M. G. LEWIS.

It was at the close of a beautiful day in early spring that Traverso Roce, accompanying the old doctor and the old sister, reached the grove on the borders of the beautiful lake upon the banks of which was situated the "Calm Retreat."

A large, low, white building, surrounded with piazzas and shaded by fragrant and flowering southern trees, it looked like the luxurious country-seat of some wealthy merchant or planter, rather than a prison for the insane.

Doctor St. Jean conducted his young assistant into a broad and cool hall, on each side of which doors opened into spacious rooms, occupied by the proprietor and his household. The cells of the patients, as it appeared, were up stairs. The country doctor and the matron who had been in charge during the absence of the proprietor and his sister, now came forward to welcome the party, and report the state of the institution and its inmates.

All were as usual, the country doctor said, except "Mademoiselle."

"And what of her, how is Mademoiselle?"—A patient was interesting, Doctor Roce?," said the old Frenchman, alertly questioning his substitute and addressing Traverso.

"She has stopped her violent ravings, and seems to me to be sinking into a state of stupid despair," replied the substitute.

"A patient most interesting, my young friend! a history most pathetic; you shall hear of it some time. But come into the parlor. And you, Angelo, my sister, ring and order coffee," said the old Frenchman, leading the way into a pleasant apartment on the right of the hall, furnished with straw matting upon the floor, and bamboo settees and chairs around the walls.

Here coffee was presently served to the travelers, who soon after retired for the night.

Traverso's room was a large, pleasant apartment at the end of a wide, long hall, on each side of which were the doors opening into the cells of the patients.

Fatigued by his journey, Traverso slept soundly through the night; but early in the morning he was rudely awakened by the sounds of maniacal voices from the cells. Some were crying, some laughing aloud, some groaning, and some holding forth in fancied exhortations.

He dressed himself quickly and left his room, to walk down the length of the long hall and observe the cells on each side. The doors were at regular intervals, and each door had in its centre a small opening to enable the proprietor to look in upon the patients.

As these were all women, and some of them delicate and refined even in their insanity, Traverso felt shocked at this necessary, if it were necessary, exposure of their sanctuaries.

The cells were of a fact small bed rooms, that with their white-washed walls and white curtained beds and windows, looked excessively neat, clean and cool, but also it must be confessed, very bare, dreary and cheerless.

Even a looking-glass would be a great benefit to those poor girls, for I remember that even Clara, in her violent grief, and mother in her life-long sorrow, never neglected their looking-glass and personal appearance," said Traverso to himself as he passed down the hall, and resolved that this little indulgence should be afforded the patients.

And except those first involuntary glances, he scrupulously avoided looking in through the gratings upon those hapless women who had no means of securing themselves.

But as he turned to go down the stairs, his eyes went full into an opposite cell, and fell upon a vision of beauty and sorrow that immediately riveted his gaze.

It was a small and graceful female figure, clothed in deep black, seated by the window, with her elbow resting upon the sill and her chin supported on her hand. Her eyes were cast down until her eye-lashes lay like inky lines upon her snow-white cheek. Her face, of classic regularity and marble whiteness, bore a ghastly contrast to the long eye-lashes, arched eye-brows and silken ringlets, black as midnight. She might have been a statue or a picture, so motionless she sat.

Conscious of the wrong of gazing upon this solitary woman, Traverso forced his looks away and passed on down stairs, where he again met the old doctor and Mademoiselle Angele at breakfast.

After breakfast, Doctor St. Jean invited his young assistant to accompany him on a round of visits to the patients, and they went immediately up to the hall, at the end of which Traverso had slept.

"These are our incurables, but they are not violent; incurables never are. Poor Mademoiselle! she has just been conveyed to this ward," said the doctor, opening the door of the first cell on the right at the head of the stairs, and admitting Traverso at once into the presence of the beautiful, black-haired, snow-faced woman, who had so much interested him.

"This is my friend, Doctor Roce, Mademoiselle; Doctor, this is my friend, Mademoiselle Mont De St. Pierre."

Traverso bowed profoundly, and the lady arose, curtsied and resumed her seat, saying coldly:

"I have told you, Monsieur, never to address me as Mademoiselle; you persist in doing so; and I shall never notice the insult again."

"Ten thousand pardons, Madame! but if

Madame will allow me I ever remember

The classic lip and she disdain

"I take an ap-
peal to Madame you

Frenchman, turn
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Traverso con-
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violent ravings, and into a state of stupid

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large, pleasant apart-ment hall, on each side opening into the cells of

Traverse slept soundly in the morning he heard the sounds of mania—she was crying, some-thing, and some exhortations.

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The doors were at the door had in its centre a proprietor to look

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and her chin sup-ported were cast down upon her knees lines open of classic regularity

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Jean invited him to sit on a round table, and they went, and immediately of which Travers

but they are not poor Mademoiselle, to this ward."

the first coil of the stairs, and the presence of the woman, who

Madame will always look so young! so beautiful! can I ever remember that she is a widow?"

The classic lip of the woman curled in scorn, and she disdained a reply.

"I take an appeal to Monsieur Le Docteur—Is not Madame young and beautiful?" asked the Frenchman, turning to Travers, while the splendid eyes of the stranger passed from the one to the other.

Travers caught the glance of the lady and bowed gravely. It was the most delicate, and proper reply.

She smiled almost as gravely, and with a much kinder expression than any she had bestowed upon the Frenchman.

"And how has Madame fared during my absence so long? The servants—have they been respectful? have they been observant? have they been obedient to the will of Madame? Madame has but to speak!" said the doctor, bowing politely.

"Why should I speak when every word I utter you believe, or affect to believe, to be the ravings of a maniac? I will speak no more," said the lady, turning away her superb dark eyes and looking out of the window.

"Ah, Madame will not so punish her friend, her servant! her slave!"

A gesture of disgust and indignation was the only reply delivered by the lady.

"Come away; she is angry and may become dangerously excited," said the old doctor, leading the way from the cell.

"Did you tell me this lady is one of the incurables?" inquired Travers, when they had left her apartment.

"Bah! yes, doctor girl, 'vra incurable,' as my sister would say."

"Yet, she appears to me to be perfectly sane, as well as exceedingly beautiful and interesting."

"Ah, bah! my excellent; my admirer! my inexperienced young friend, that is all you know of lunatics! We have no less violence of assertion, they every one have upon their sanity; just as criminals protest their innocence! Ah, bah! you shall go into every cell in this ward, and not find one lunatic among them," sneered the old doctor, as he led the way into the next bedroom.

It was indeed as he had foretold, and Travers found himself deeply affected by the melancholy, the earnest, and sometimes the violent manner in which the poor unfortunates protested their sanity, and implored or demanded to be restored to home and friends.

"You perceive," said the doctor, with a dry laugh, "that they are none of them crazy!"

"I see," said Travers, "but I also detect a very great difference between that lovely woman in the south cell and these other inmates."

"Bah! bah! bah! she is more beautiful! more accomplished! more refined than the others, and she is in one of her lucid intervals! that is all, but as to a difference between her insanity and that of other patients, it lies in this, that she is the most hopelessly mad of the whole lot. She has been mad eighteen years!"

"Is it possible!" exclaimed Travers, incredulously.

"She lost her reason at the age of sixteen, and she is now thirty-four—you can calculate!"

"It is amazing and very sorrowful! how beautiful she is!"

"Yes, her beauty was a fatal gift! It is a sad story! Ah, it is a sad story! You shall hear of it when we get through."

"I can connect no idea of woman's frailty with that refined and intellectual face," said Travers, coldly.

young lady, Mademoiselle Mont de St. Pierre, is of a family noble and distinguished—a relative of this officer, illustrious and brave. At fifteen, Mademoiselle met a man, handsome and without honor. Ah, bah! you understand! at sixteen the child became a fallen angel! She lost her reason through sorrow and shame! This relative—this gentleman, illustrious and noble, tender and considerate—took her to the seclusion of his country house, where she lived in elegance, luxury and honor. But as the years passed, her madly increased; her presence became dangerous; in a word, the gentleman, distinguished and noble, saw the advertisement of my 'calm retreat,' my institution incomparable, and he wrote to me. Ah! he is a good man, this officer so gallant, so chivalrous; but she is ungrateful!"

"Ungrateful!"

"Ah, bah! yes; it is the way with lunatics! They ever imagine their best friends to be their worst enemies! The poor, crazed creature fancies she is the sister-in-law of this officer illustrious! she thinks that she is the widow of his brother, and that she imagines he murdered, and that she is the mother of children whom she says he has abducted or destroyed, so that he may enjoy the estate that is her widow's dower and their orphan's patrimony! That is the reason why she insists on being with Madame instead of Mademoiselle, and we indulge her when we think of it."

"But all this is very singular!"

"Ah, bah! who can account for a lunatic's fancies? She is the maddest of the whole lot! Sometimes she used to become so violent that we would have to restrain her! But lately, Doctor Wood tells me, she is quite still; that we consider her sane, there is always hope for a lunatic until they begin to sink into this state," said the doctor, with an air of competency.

CHAPTER LVII.

THE MANIA'S STORY.

A scheming villain forged this tale That came me in this dreary cell, My fate unknown, my friends below, O doctor, haste that fire to tell! Oh, haste my daughter's heart to cheer, Her heart, at once, 'twould grieve and dead To know the chained and captive here, I am not mad! I am not mad!—M. G. Lewis.

There is some advantage in having imagination, since that visionary faculty opens the mental eyes to facts that more practical and duller intellects could never see.

Travers was young and romantic, and deeply interested in the doctor's beautiful patient. He, therefore, did not yield his full credulity to the tale told by the "relative illustrious" to the old doctor, as to the history and cause of the lady's madness, or even take it for granted that the dis-

tinguished officer's story might be a wicked fabrication, to conceal a crime, and that the lady's "crazy father" might be the pure truth.

And Travers had heard to what heinous uses private mad-houses were sometimes put by some unscrupulous men, who wished to get certain women out of their way, yet who shrink from bloodshed.

And he thought it not impossible that this "gentle and so noble, so compassionate, and tender" might be just such a man, and this "fallen angel" such a victim. And he determined to watch and observe. And he farther resolved to treat the interesting patient with all the studious delicacy and respect due to a refined and accomplished woman in the full possession of her faculties.

It was really mad, this demagogue would not hurt her; and if she were not mad, it was the only proper conduct to be observed towards her, as any other must be equally cruel and offensive. Her bodily health certainly required the attendance of a physician, and Travers had, therefore, a fair excuse for his daily visits to her cell.

His respectful manners, his grave bow, and his reverential tone in saying—

"I hope I find you stronger to-day, Madam," seemed to gratify one who had few sources of pleasure.

"I thank you," she would answer, with a softening tone and look, adding "yes," or "no," as the truth might be.

One day, after looking at the young physician some time, she suddenly said:

"You never forget! You always address me by my proper title of Madam, and without the touch of irony which others indulge in when 'humoring' me, as they call it! Now, pray explain to me why, in sober earnest, you give me this title!"

"Because, Madam, I have heard you lay claim to that title, and I think that you, yourself, of all the world, have the best right to know how you should be addressed," said Travers respectfully.

The lady looked wistfully at him, and said—

"But my next-door neighbor asserts that she is a queen; she insists upon being called 'your majesty.' Has she, then, the best right to know how she should be addressed?"

"Alas! no, Madam; and I am pained that you should do yourself the great wrong to draw such comparisons."

"Why? Am not I and the 'queen' inmates of the same ward of incurables, in the same lunatic asylum?"

"Yes, but not with equal justice of cause. The 'queen' is a hopelessly deranged, but happy lunatic. You, Madam, are a lady who has retained the full possession of your faculties amid circumstances and surroundings that must have overwhelmed the reason of a weaker mind."

The lady looked at him in wonder and almost in joy.

"Ah, it was not the strength of my mind, it was the strength of the Almighty upon whom my mind was stayed, for time and for eternity, that has saved my reason in all these many years! But how did you know that I was not mad? How do you know that this is anything more than a lucky interval of longer duration than usual?" she asked.

"Madam, you will forgive me for having looked at you so closely and watched you so constantly, but I am your physician, you know—"

"I have nothing to forgive and much to thank you for, young man. You have an honest, truthful, frank young face! the only one such that I have seen in eighteen years of sorrow? But why, then, did you not believe the doctor? why did you not take the fact of my insanity upon trust, as others did?" she asked, fixing her glorious dark eyes inquiringly upon his face.

"Madam, from the first moment in which I saw you, I disbelieved the story of your insanity and mentioned my doubts to Doctor St. Jean—"

"Who ridiculed your doubts, of course. I can readily believe that he did. Doctor St. Jean is not a very bad man; but he is a charlatan and a dunder; he received the story of my reported insanity as he received me, as an advantage to his institution, and he never gave himself the unprofitable trouble to investigate the circumstances."

"I told him the truth about myself as calmly as I now speak to you; but somebody else had told him that this truth was the fiction of a deranged imagination, and he found it more convenient and profitable to believe somebody else! But again I ask you, why were not you also, so discreetly obtuse?"

"Madam," said Travers, blushing ingeniously, "I hope you will forgive me for saying that it is impossible any one could see you without becoming deeply interested in your fate. Your face, Madam, speaks equally of profound sorrow and of saintly resignation. I saw no sign of madness in the calm depths of those dark eyes, there! In the calm depths of those dark eyes, there! I know that the frowns of insanity never could have burned. Pardon me that I looked at you so closely; I was your physician, and was most deeply anxious concerning my patient."

"I thank you; may the Lord bless you; perhaps He has sent you here for my relief; for you are right, young friend; you are altogether right; I have been wild with grief, frantic with despair, I have been, wild with grief, frantic with despair, but never for one hour in the whole course of my life have I been insane."

"I believe you, Madam, on my sacred honor, I do!" said Travers, fervently.

"And yet you could give no one about this place to believe you! They have taken my brother-in-law's false story, endorsed as it is by the doctor-proprietor, for granted. And just so long as I persist in telling my true story, they will consider me a maniac, and so often as the thought of

my many wrongs and sorrows, combines with the nervous irritability to which every woman is occasionally subject, and makes me rave with impetuousness and excitement, they will report me a dangerous lunatic, subject to periodical attacks of violent frenzy; but, young man, even at my worst I am no more mad than any other woman, wild with grief and hysterical through nervous irritation, might at any time become without having her sanity called in question."

"I am sure that you are not, nor ever could have been, Madam. The nervous excitement of which you speak is entirely within the control of medicine, which mania proper is not. You will use the means that I prescribe and your continued calmness will go far to convince even these dunces that they have been wrong."

"I will do everything you recommend; indeed some weeks before you came, I had put a constraint upon myself and forced myself to be very still; but the effect of that was, that acting upon their theory they said that I was sinking into the last or 'melancholy-mad' state of mania, and they put me in here with the incurables."

"Lady," said Travers, respectfully, taking her hand, "now that I am acquainted in some slight degree with the story of your heavy wrongs, do not suppose that I will ever leave you, until I see you restored to your friends."

"Friends! ah! young man, do you really suppose that if I had friends, I should have been thus long unthought of? I have no friends, Doctor Rooke, except yourself, newly sent me by the Lord! nor any relatives except a young daughter whom I have seen but twice in my life—once upon the dreadful night when she was born and years ago. My little daughter does not know that she has a poor mother living, and I have no friend upon earth but you, whom the Lord has sent."

"And not in vain!" said Travers, fervently, "though you have no other friends, fervently, the law to protect you. I will make your cousin! I have a good mother to whom suffering lady, listen! I have a lovely betrothed bride, whom you will form; and we have a beautiful home among the hills of Virginia; and you shall add to our happiness by living with us."

The lady looked at Travers Rooke with astonishment and incredulity.

"Boy," she said, "do you know what you are promising—to assume the whole burden of the support of a useless woman for her whole life! What would your mother or your promised wife say to such a proposition?"

"Ah! you do not know my dear mother nor my Clara, nor, even me. I tell you the truth when I say that your coming among us would make us happier. Oh, Madam, I myself owe so much to the Lord, and to his instruments, the benevolent of this world, for all that has been done for me. I seize with gratitude the chance to serve in my turn any of His suffering children! Pray believe me!"

"I do! I do, Doctor Rooke! I see that life has not deprived you of a generous, youthful, enthusiasm," said the lady, with the tears welling up into her glorious blue eyes.

After a little, with a smile, she held out her hand to him, saying:

"Young friend, if you should succeed in freeing me from this prison, and establishing my sanity before a court of justice, I and my daughter will come into the immediate possession of six down, Doctor Rooke, while I tell you my true story, and, very much more of it than I have ever confided to any human being!"

"Lady, I am very impatient to hear your history, but I am your physician, and must first consider your health. You have been sufficiently exhausted for one day; it is late; take your tea and have visited the ward, and you have taken your breakfast, I will come, and you shall tell me the story of your life."

"I will do whatever you think best," said the lady.

Travers lifted her hand to his lips, bowed, and retreated from the cell.

That same night Travers wrote to his friend Herbert Greyson in Mexico, and to his mother

and Clara, describing his interesting patient, though as yet he could tell but little of her, not even in fact her real name, but promising fuller particulars next time, and declaring his intention of bringing her home for the present to their house.

CHAPTER LVIII.

END OF THE LADY'S STORY.

Of the present naught is bright,
But in the coming years I see
A brilliant and a cheerful light,
Which burns before thee constantly.
—W. D. GALLAGHER.

At the appointed hour the next morning, Travers Rooke repaired to the cell of his mysterious patient.

He was pleased to find her up and dressed with more than usual care and taste, and looking, upon the whole, much better in health and spirits than upon the preceding day.

"Ah, my young hero, is it you? you see that I am ready for you," she said, holding out her hand.

"You are looking very well this morning!" said Travers, smiling.

"Yes, hope is a fine tonic, Doctor Rooke."

She was seated by the same window at which Travers had first seen her, and she now beckoned the young doctor to come and take a seat near her.

"My story is almost as melo-dramatic as a modern romance, Dr. Rooke," she said.

Travers bowed gravely and waited.

"My father was a French patriot, who suffered death in the cause of liberty, when I, his only child, was but fourteen years of age. My mother, broken-hearted by his loss, followed him within a few months. I was left an orphan and penniless, for our estate was confiscated."

"Ah, your sorrows came early and heavily indeed," said Travers.

"Yes; well! a former servant of my father, held an humble situation of porter, on the ground-floor of a house, the several floors of which were let out to different lodgers. This poor man and his wife gave me a temporary home with them, as a young Virginian gentleman of fortune travelling for pleasure and improvement, whose name was Mr. Eugene Le Noir."

"Le Noir! cried Travers with a violent start. "Yes! what is the matter?"

"It is a familiar, Virginian name, Madam, that is all I pray go on."

"Mr. Le Noir was as good and kind as he was wise and cultivated. He used to stop to gossip with old Cligot every time he stopped at the porter's room to take or leave his key. There he heard of the poor little orphan of the millinery, old servant. He pitied me, and after many consultations with father and mother Cligot, he assumed the position of guardian to me, and placed me at one of the best schools in Paris. He lingered in the city and came to see me more often; but always saw me in the presence of Madam, the father or an elder brother, and I knew that he would have given a younger sister, had he possessed one. Ah! Doctor Rooke, tell me besides yourself, are there many other men in your State like him?"

"I knew but one such; but go on, dear Madam."

"When I had been to school some months, he came to me one day scarcely able to conceal his woe! He told me that his father was ill and that he should have to sail in the first packet from Havre, and in fact that he had then come to leave of me. I was wild with grief, not only up of losing him, but upon my own, at the prospect and a French child to boot. I was but a child of the world; I regarded this noble gentleman, who was as much my superior in years as in everything else, as a father, guardian or elder brother, so in an agony of grief, I threw myself into his arms, sobbing and weeping bitterly, and imploring him not to break my heart by leaving me! It was in vain madam the Directress exclaimed and expostulated at these improprieties. I am sure

I did not hear a word until he spoke. Putting me out of his arms he said:

"Then take me with you—take your poor little one with you, and do not pull her out of your warm, good heart, or she will wither and die like a poor flower torn up by the roots!" I cried, between my sobs and tears.

"He drew me back to his bosom and whispered:

"There is but one way in which I can take you with me, my child. Will you be my wife, little Capitole?"

"Capitole!" cried Travers, with another great start.

"Yes; why? what is the matter now?"

"Why, it is such an odd name, that is all. Pray proceed, Madam."

"We were married the same day, and sailed the third morning thereafter from Havre for the United States, where we arrived, alas! only to find the noble gentleman, my Eugene's father, laid in his grave. After Mr. Le Noir's natural country life at the Hidden House—

"The Hidden House!" again exclaimed Travers Rooke.

"Yes; that is another odd name, isn't it? Well, I was very happy. At first, when I understood my real position, I had been afraid that my husband married me from compassion; but he soon proved to me that his love was as high, as pure, and as noble as himself. I was very happy! But one day, in the midst of my exultant joy, a thunderbolt fell and shattered my peaceful destruction for ever! Oh, Dr. Rooke, my husband was murdered by some unknown hand in his own woods, in open day. I cannot talk of this! I cried the widow, breaking down, overwhelmed with the rush of terrible recollections.

Travers poured out a glass of water, and handed it to her.

She drank it, made an effort at self-control, and resumed:

"Thus, scarcely sixteen years of age, I was a widow, helpless, penniless, and entirely dependent upon my brother-in-law, Colonel Gabriel Le Noir; for by the terms of their father's will, if Eugene died without issue, the whole property descended to his younger brother, Gabriel. To speak the truth, Colonel Le Noir was exceedingly kind to me after my awful bereavement, until a circumstance was discovered that changed all our relations. It was two months after his death, that I discovered, with mingled emotions of joy and sorrow, that Heaven had certainly destined me to be a mother. I had kept my cherished secret to myself as long as it was possible, but it could not indeed be long concealed from the household. I believe that my brother-in-law was the first to suspect it. He called me into his study one day, and I obeyed like a child. And there he rudely questioned me upon the subject of my sacred mother-mystery. He learned the truth, more from my silence than from my replies, for I could not answer him."

"The brutal the miserable bound!" ejaculated Travers.

"Oh, Dr. Rooke, I could not tell you the avalanche of abuse, insult, and invective that he meted out to my defenceless head. He accused me of more crimes than I had ever heard talk of. He told me that my conduct was an impossible one unless I had been false to the memory of his brother; that I had dishonored his name, disgraced his house, and brought myself to shame; that I should leave the roof, leave the neighborhood, and die as I deserved to die, in a ditch! I made no reply. I was crushed into silence under the weight of his reproaches."

"The brutal the miserable bound!" ejaculated Travers.

"The caiff! the pitroim! Ah, poor stranger, why did you not leave the house at once, and throw yourself upon the protection of the minister of your parish, or some other kind neighbor?"

"Alas, I was a child, a widow, and a foreigner, all in one. I did not know your land, or your laws, or your people. I was not hopeful or confident, I had suffered so acutely, and I was overwhelmed by his abuse."

"But did you not know, dear lady, that all his rage was aroused only by the fact that the birth of your child would dishonor him?"

"Ah, no. I was not aware, at that time, that Gabriel Le Noir was a villain, and that his anger honest, though unjust; and I was as ignorant

until he spoke. Putting
duty calls me."

"You—take your poor
do not pull her out of
she will wither and die
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ant as a child—I had no mother nor matronly
friend to instruct me. I knew that I had broken
no command of God or man—that I had
been a faithful wife, but when Gabriel Le Noir
accused me with such bitter earnestness, I feared
that some strange departure from the usual
course of nature had occurred for my destruction.
And I was overwhelmed by mortification, terror,
and despair."

"Ah, the villain!" exclaimed Traversé, be-
tween his teeth."

"He told me at last that, to save the memory
of his dead brother he would hide my dishonor;
and he ordered me to seclude myself from the
sight of all persons. I obeyed him like a slave,
grateful even for the shelter of his roof."

"A roof that was your own as he very well
knew. And he knew also, the catfish, that if the
circumstance became known, the whole State
would have protested you in your rights, and
ejected him like a cur."

"Nay, even in that case no harm should have
reached him on my account. He was my hus-
band's brother."

"And worst enemy. But proceed, dear lady."

"Well, I secluded myself as he commanded.
For four months I never left the attic to which he
had ordered me to retire. At the end of that time
I became the mother of twins—a boy and a girl.
The boy only opened his eyes on the world to
close them again directly. The girl was living
and healthy. The old nurse who attended me
had an honest and compassionate face; I per-
suaded her to secretly save the living child,
and to present the dead babe to Colonel Le Noir
as the only one; for the suspicions that had never
been awakened for myself were alarmed for my
child. I instinctively felt that he would have
destroyed it."

"The mother's instinct is like inspiration,"
said Traversé.

"It may be so, well, the old woman pitied me
and did as I desired. She took the dead child
to Colonel Le Noir, who carried it off, and after-
wards buried it as the sole heir of his elder brother.
The old woman carried off my living child and
my wailing ring, concealed under her ample
shawl. Anxious for the fate of my child caused
me to do what nothing else on earth would have
tempted me to do—to creep about the halls and
passages on tiptoe and under cover of the night,
and listen at key-holes," said the lady, blushing
deeply at the recollection.

"You—you were perfectly right Mrs. Le Noir!
In a den of robbers, where your life and honor
were always at stake, you could have done no
otherwise!" exclaimed Traversé, warmly.

"I learned by this means that my poor old
nurse had paid with her liberty for her kindness
to me. She had been abducted and forced from
her native country together with a child found in
her possession, which they evidently suspected
and I knew to be mine. Oh, heaven! the agony
then of thinking of what might be her unknown
fate,—worse than death, perhaps? I felt that I
had only succeeded in saving her life,—doubtful
good!"

Here Mrs. Le Noir paused in thought for a
few moments and then resumed.

"It is the memory of a long, dreary and hope-
less imprisonment, my recollection of my resi-
dence in that house! In the same manner in
which I gained all my information, I learned that
it was reported in the neighborhood that I had
gone mad with grief for the loss of my husband,
and that I was an inmate of a mad-house in the
north! It was altogether false! I never left
the Hidden House in all these years until about
two years ago. My life there was dreary beyond
all conception. I was forbidden to go out or to
appear at a window! I had the whole attic,
containing some eight or ten rooms, to rove over,
but I was forbidden to descend. An ill-looking
woman, called Doreen Knight, between whom and
the elder Le Noir there seemed to have been some
sinful bond, was engaged ostensibly by my atten-
dant; but really as my jailer. Nevertheless,
when the sense of confinement grew intolerable I
sometimes eluded her vigilance and wandered
about the house at night."

"Thence no light," said Traversé, "vying
rise to the report that the house was haunted!"

Mrs. Le Noir smiled, saying:

"I believe the Le Noirs secretly encouraged
that report! I'll tell you why. They gave me a

chamber-lamp enclosed in an intense blue shade,
that cast a strangely unearthly light around. Their
ostensible reason was to ensure my safety from
fire. Their real reason was that this light might
be seen from without in what was reputed to be
an uninhabited portion of the house, and give
color to its bad reputation among the ignorant of
being haunted!"

"So much for the origin of one authenticated
ghost story," said Traversé.

"Yes! and there was still more circumstantial
evidence to support this ghostly reputation of the
house. As the years passed I had, even in my
confinement, gathered knowledge in one way and
another—picking up stray books and hearing
stray conversation; and so, in the end I learned
how gross a deception and how great a wrong had
been practised upon me. I was not wise or
cunning. I betrayed constantly to my attendant
my knowledge of these things. In consequence
of which my confinement became still more re-
stricted."

"Yes, they were afraid of you, and fear is
always the mother of cruelty," said Traversé.

"Well, from the time that I became enlight-
ened as to my real position, all my faculties were
put to the alert and means of escape and
making my condition known to the authorities.
One night they had a guest, Colonel Egdon,
of the army. Old Doreen had her hands full, and
forgot her prisoner. My door was left unlocked.
So, long after Colonel Egdon had retired to rest,
and when all the household were buried in repose
I stole away and crept down to the chamber of
the guest with no other purpose than to make
known my wrongs and appeal to his compassion.
I entered his chamber, approached his bed to
speak to him, when this hero of a hundred fields
started up in a panic, and at the sight of the pale
woman who drew his curtains in the dead of
night he shrieked, violently rang his bell, and
fainted prone away!"

"Ha! ha! ha! he could brave an army, or
march into a cannon's mouth, easier than meet a
supposed demon of another world! Well, Doctor
Johnson believed in ghosts," laughed Traversé.

"It remained for me to retreat as fast as pos-
sible to my room, to avoid the Le Noirs, who
were hurrying with headlong speed to the guest-
chamber. They knew, of course, that I was the
ghost, although they affected to treat their visitor's
story as a dream. After that my confine-
ment was so strict, that for years I had no op-
portunity of leaving my attic. At last the strict
espionage was relaxed. Sometimes my door
would be left unlocked. Upon one such occa-
sion, in creeping about in the dark, I learned,
by over-hearing a conversation between Le Noir
and his house-keeper, that my long lost daugh-
ter, Capitola, had been found, and was living at
Hurricane Hall! This was enough to comfort
me for years. About three years ago, the sur-
veillance over me was so modified that I was
left again to roam about the upper rooms of the
house at will, until I learned that they had a
new inmate, young Clara Day, a ward of Le
Noir! Oh, how I longed to warn that child to
fly! But I could not! alas, again I was restricted
to my own room, lest I should be seen by
her! But again, upon one occasion, old Doreen
forgot to lock my door at night. I stole forth
from my room and learned that a young girl,
caught out in the storm, was to stay all night
at the Hidden House. Young girls were not plenti-
ful in that neighborhood, I knew. Besides, some
circumstances I could find out else in my vicinity.
I found it in a plain, gold ring—the same which
I had entrusted to the old nurse. Some strange
impulse caused me to slip the ring upon my
finger. Then I went to the bed and threw aside
the curtains to gaze upon the sleeper. My girl
my own girl! with what strange sensations I
first looked upon her face! Her eyes were open
and fixed upon mine in a panic of terror. I
stooped to press my lips to hers and she closed
her eyes in mortal fear. I carried nothing but
terror with me! I withdrew from the room and

went back, sobbing, to my chamber. My poor
girl, next morning, unconsciously, betrayed her
mother. It had nearly cost me my life.

"When the Le Noirs came home, the first night
of their arrival they entered my room, seized
me in my bed, and dragged me shrieking from it!"

"Good heaven! what punishment is sufficient
for such wretches!" exclaimed Traversé start-
ing up and pacing the narrow limits of the cell.

"Listen! They soon stopped both my shrieks
and my breath at once! I lost consciousness
for a time, and when I awoke I found myself
in a close carriage, rattling over a mountain road,
through the night. Late the next morning we

reached an uninhabited country-house, where I
was again imprisoned, in charge of an old dumb
woman, whom Le Noir called Mrs. Raven. This
I afterwards understood to be Willow Heights,
the property of the orphan heiress, Clara Day.
And here, also, for the term of my stay, the
presence of the unknown inmate gave the house
the reputation of being haunted. The old dumb
woman was a shade kinder to me than Doreen
Knight had been; but I did not stay in her
charge very long. One night the Le Noirs came
in hot haste. The young heiress had been deliv-
ered from their charge by a doctor of the Orphan
Court, and they had to give up her house. I was
drugged and hurried away. Some narcotic
sedative must have been instilled into my food, for I
was in a state of semi-insensibility and mild delirium
during the whole course of a long journey by land
and sea, which passed to me like a dream, and at
the end of which I found myself here. No doubt,
from the excessive use of narcotics, there was
something wild and stupid in my manner and ap-
pearance that justified the charge of madness.

And when I found that I was a prisoner, in a lunatic
asylum, far, far away from the neighborhood
where, at least, I had once been known, I gave
way to the wilder grief that further confirmed the
story of my madness. I have been here two years,
occasionally giving way to outbreaks of wild
despair, that the doctor calls frenzy. I was
sinking into an apathy when one day I opened the
little Bible that lay upon the table of my cell. I
fixed upon the last chapters in the Gospel of John.
That narrative of meek patience and Divine love
it did for me what no power under that of God
could have done. It saved me! it saved me from
madness! it saved me from despair! There is a
time for the second birth of every soul: this time
had come for me. From that hour, this book has
been my constant companion and comfort. I
have learned from its pages how little it matters
how or where this fleeting mortal life is passed,
so that it answers its purpose of preparing the
soul for another. I have learned patience with
sinners, forgiveness of enemies, and confidence in
God. In a word, I trust I have learned the way
of salvation, and in that have learned everything.
Your coming, and your words, young friend, have
stirred within my heart the desire to be free, to
mingle again on equal terms with my fellow-beings,
and, above all, to find and embrace my child. But
not wildly anxious am I even for these earthly
blessings. These, as well as all things else, I de-
sire to leave to the Lord, praying that He will
may be mine! Young friend, my story is told."

"Madam," said Traversé, after a thoughtful
pause, "your fate has been more nearly connected
than you could have imagined. These Le Noirs
have been my enemies as they are yours. That
young orphan heiress, who appealed from their
cruelty to the Orphan Court, was my own
betrothed, Willow Heights was her patrimony,
and is now her quiet home, where she lives with
my mother, and where in their name I invite you
to come. And take this comfort also: you are
no longer lives; months ago I left him with
a mortal wound. This morning the papers an-
nounced his death. There remains, therefore, but
little for me to do, but to take legal measures to
free you from this place, and restore you to your
home. Within an hour I shall set out for New
Orleans, for the purpose of taking the necessary
steps. Until my return thence, dear lady," and
Traversé, respectfully taking her hand—"Fare-
well, and be of good cheer!"

CHAPTER LIX.

PROSPECTS DROUGHTEN.

Thus far our fortune keeps an onward course.
And we are greeted with wreaths of victory.
—SHAKESPEARE.

Leaving Mrs. Le Noir, Traversé went down to the stable, added the horse that had been allotted to his use, and set off for a long day's journey to New Orleans, where late at night he arrived, and put up at the St. Charles.

He slept deeply from fatigue until late the next morning, when he was awakened by the sound of drums, trumpets and fife, and by general rejoicing.

He arose and looked from his windows to ascertain the cause, and saw the square full of people in a state of the highest excitement, watching for a military procession coming up the street.

It was the United States troops under their gallant commanders, who had landed from the steam-boats that morning and were now marching from the quay up to their quarters at the St. Charles.

As they advanced, Traversé, eagerly upon the lookout, recognized his own regiment, and presently saw Major Greyson himself.

Traversé withdrew from the window, hurriedly completed his toilet, and hastened down stairs, where he soon found himself face to face with Herbert, who warmly grasping his hand, exclaimed:

"You here, old friend? Why I thought you were down in East Feliciana, with your interesting patient!"

"It is for the interest of that 'interesting patient' that I am here, Herbert! Did I tell you, she was one of the victims of that demon, Le Noir?"

"No; but I know it from another source! I know as much, or more of her, perhaps than you do!"

"Ah!" exclaimed Traversé, in surprise.

"Yes! I know, for instance, that she is Capitola's mother, the long lost widow of Eugene Le Noir, the mistress of the Hidden House, and the ghost who drew folk's curtains there at night."

"Then you do know something about her, but how did you arrive at the knowledge?"

"By the 'last dying speech and confession' of Gabriel Le Noir, confided to me, to come to rest in the second bell. But, come! there is to breakfast; join us and afterwards you and I will retire and compare notes," said Herbert, taking the arm of his friend, as they followed the moving crowd into the breakfast parlor.

After the morning meal was concluded the two friends withdrew together, to the chamber occupied by Traversé Roche, where they sat down for mutual explanations.

Herbert first related to Traversé all that had occurred from the time that the latter left the city of Mexico, including the arrival of Craven Le Noir at the dying bed of his father, the subsequent death and funeral of Colonel Le Noir, and the late emigration of Craven, who, to avoid the shame of explorers' revelation, joined a party of explorers bound for the recently discovered gold mines of California.

"The civilized world is then rid of two villains at once," said the uncompromising Traversé.

Herbert took from his pocket the confession of Colonel Le Noir, which he said he was now at liberty to use as he thought proper for the ends of justice. That certain parts of the disclosure intimately concerned Traversé Roche; but he should, therefore, read the whole.

The first item was, that he had sought to win the affections of Marah Roche, the supposed wife of Major Le Noir; he had sedulously wooed and followed her with his suit during the whole summer; she had constantly repulsed and avoided him; he, listening to his own evil passions, had bribed her maid to admit him in the dark to Marah's cabin, upon a certain night.

When her husband was to be absent, that the unexpected return of Major Warfield, who had tracked him to the house, had prevented the success of his evil purpose, but had not saved the reputation of the innocent wife, whose infuriated

husband would not believe her ignorant of the presence of the villain in her house; that he, Gabriel Le Noir, in hatred as well as in shame, had forborne until now to make the explanation, which he hoped might now, late in life as it was, bring the long severed pair together, and establish Marah Roche and her son in their legal and social rights.

The second item in the black list of crime was the death of his elder brother, whom he declared he had not intended to kill; that, having contracted large debts which he was unable to pay, he had returned secretly from his distant quarters to demand the money from his brother, who had often helped him; that, meeting his brother in the woods, he made this request. Eugene reproached him for his extravagance and folly, and refused to aid him; an encounter ensued, in which Eugene fell. He, Gabriel Le Noir, fled, pursued by the curse of Cain, and reached his own quarters before even his absence had been suspected. His agency in the death of his brother was not suspected even by his accomplice in other crimes, the outlaw called Black Donald, who, thinking to gain an ascendancy over one whom he called his partner, actually pretended to have made away with Eugene Le Noir for the sake of his younger brother!

The third item of confession was the abduction of the nurse and the young widow of Eugene, the circumstances of which are already known to the reader.

The fourth in the dreadful list comprised the deceptions, wrongs and persecutions practiced upon Madame Eugene Le Noir, and the final false imprisonment of that lady under the charge of insanity, in the private mad-house kept by Doctor Pierre St. Jean, in East Feliciana.

In conclusion, he spoke of the wrongs done to Clara Day, whose pardon, with that of others, he begged. And he prayed that in consideration of his son, as little publicity as was possible might be given to these crimes.

During the reading of this confession, the eyes of Traversé Roche were fixed in wonder and half incredulity upon the face of Herbert, and at its conclusion he said:

"What a mass of crime! But that we may not dare to question the mercy of the Lord, I should ask if these were sins that he would ever pardon? Herbert, it appals me to think of it!"

"Then, after deep thought, he added: 'This, then, was the secret of my dear mother's long unhappiness! She was Major Warfield's forsaken wife!—Herbert! I feel as though I never, never, could forgive my father!'"

"Traversé, if Major Warfield had *wifely* and *scandalously* forsaken your mother, I should say that your resentment was natural and right!—Who should be an honorable woman's champion if not her own son?—But Major Warfield, as well as his wife, was *murdered* against that atoning! Your parents were both victims of a cruel conspiracy, and he suffered as much in his way, as she did in hers," said Herbert.

"I always thought, somehow, that my dear mother was a forsaken wife. She never told me so; but there was something about her circumstances and manners, her retired life, her condition, so much below her deserts, her never speaking of her husband's death—which would have been natural for her to do, had she been a widow—all, somehow, went to give me the impression that my father had abandoned us. Lately I had suspected Major Warfield had something to do with the sad affair, though I never once suspected him to be my father!—so much for natural instincts," said Traversé, with a melancholy smile.

"Traversé," said Herbert, with the design of drawing him off from sad remembrances of his mother's early trials. "Traversé, this confession, signed and witnessed as it is, will wonderfully simplify your course of action in regard to the deliverance of Madame Le Noir."

"Yes; so it will," said Traversé, with animation. "There will be no need now of applying to law; especially if you will come down with me to East Feliciana, and bring the confession with you."

"I will set out with you this very morning, if you wish, as I am on leave. What! to hasten the release of Capitola's mother! I would set out at midnight, and ride straight on for a week!"

"Ah! there is no need of such extravagant feats of travel. It is now ten o'clock; if we start within an hour, we can reach the 'Calm Retreat' by eleven o'clock to-night."

"En route, then," exclaimed Herbert, raising and ringing the bell.

Traversé ordered horses, and in twenty minutes, the friends were on the road to East Feliciana.

They reached the "Calm Retreat" so late that night, that there was none but the porter awake to admit them.

Traversé took his friend up to his own dormitory, saying, laughingly:

"It is an unappreciable distance of time since you and I occupied the same bed, Herbert."

"Yes! but it is not the first by a long time. Do you remember, Traversé, the low nights, we used to sleep, and how on stormy nights, we used to listen to the rain pattering on the roof, within two or three inches of our faces, and how we used to be half afraid to turn over, for fear that we should bump our heads against the timbers of the ceiling?"

"Yes, indeed," said Traversé. And thereupon the two friends launched into a discussion of old times, when the two widows and their sons lived together—the two women occupying one bed, and the two boys the other. And this discussion they kept up until long after they retired, and until sleep overtook them.

The next morning Traversé conducted his friend down to the breakfast-parlor, to introduce him to Doctor St. Jean, who, as soon as he perceived his young medical assistant, sprang forward, exclaiming:

"Grand Heaven! Is this then you? Have you then returned? What for did you run away with my horse?"

"I went to New Orleans in great haste, upon very important business, sir."

"Grand Dieu! I should think so, if when you ride off on my horse without saying a word! If it had been my ambling pony, I should have been in despair, if your business so hasty and so important, was accomplished, I hope?"

"Yes; I did my errand with less trouble than I had anticipated, owing to the happy circumstance of meeting my friend here, who has come down lately connected with the same business."

"Ah, very happy to see your friend. In the medical profession, I suppose?"

"No, sir, in the army. Allow me to present him—Major Herbert Greyson, of the 1st Regiment of cavalry!"

"Oui! Grand ciel! This is the brave, the distinguished, the illustrious officer, so honorably mentioned in the dispatches of the invincible Taylor, and the mighty Scott!" said the little Frenchman, bowing his night-capped head down to his slipped toes.

Herbert smiled as he returned the bow. And then the little French doctor turning to Traversé, said:

"But your business, so important and so hasty, which has brought this officer so illustrious down here—what is it, my friend?"

"We will have the honor of explaining to Monsieur le Docteur, over our coffee, if he will oblige us by ordering the servant to retire," said Traversé, who sometimes adopted in speaking to the old Frenchman, his own formal style of politeness.

"Oui, oui, certainement! Allez donc, John! Go, then, John!"

As soon as the man had gone, Traversé said:

"I propose to discuss this business over our coffee, because it will save time without interfering with our morning meal, and I know that immediately afterwards you will go your usual round of visits to your patients."

"Eh, bien! proceed, my son! proceed!"

Traversé immediately commenced and related all that was necessary concerning the fraud practised upon the institution by introducing into it an unfortunate woman, represented to be mad, but really only scornful, nervous, and excitable. And to prove the truth of his words, Traversé desired Herbert to read from the confession the portion relating to this fraud, and to show the doctor the signature of the principal and the witness.

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rejoice in a Frenchman, for the frank abandon with which he gives himself up to his emotions! Our doctor, after staring at the confession, took hold of the top of his tasseled night-cap, pulled it off his head, and threw it violently upon the floor. Then, remembering that he was exposing a cranium as bald as a peeled potato, he suddenly clapped it up again, clapped it upon his crown, and exclaimed:

"Sacred Diable!" and other ejaculations dreadful to translate, and others again, which it would be profane to set down in French or English.

Gabriel Le Noir was no longer an officer illustrious, a gentleman noble and distinguished, compassionate and tender; he was a robber, infamous! a villain atrocious! a calf! ruthless, and without remorse!

After breakfast, the doctor consented that his young hero, his little knight-errant, his dear son, should go to the distressed lady, and open the good news to her; while the great Major Greyson, the warrior invincible, should go around with himself to inspect the institution.

Traverse immediately repaired to the chamber of Mrs. Le Noir, whom he found sitting at the window, engaged in some little trifle of needle-work, the same pale, patient woman, that she had first appeared to him.

"Ah, you have come! I read good news upon your smiling face, my friend! Tell it! I have borne the worst of sorrows! I shall not have strength to bear joy!"

Traverse told her all, and then ended by saying:

"Now dear Madam, it is necessary that we leave this place within two hours, as Major Greyson's regiment leaves New Orleans for Washington to-morrow, and it is advisable that you go under our protection. We can get you a female attendant from the St. Charles!"

"Oh I can be ready in ten minutes; I have no fine lady's wardrobe to pack up!" replied Mrs. Le Noir, with a smile.

Traverse bowed and went out to procure a carriage from the next village. And in half an hour afterwards the whole party took leave of Doctor Pierre St. Jean and his "institution incomparable," and set forth on their journey to New Orleans, whence in two days afterwards they sailed for the North. And now, dear reader, let you and me take the fast boat, and get home before them to see our little Cap., and find out what adventures she is now engaged in, and how she is getting on.

CHAPTER LX.

CAPITOULA A CAPITALIST.

Plumed victory
Is truly painted with a cheerful look,
Equally distanced from proud insolence
And sad dejection. —Massillon.

How glad I am to get back to my little Cap.; for I know very well, reader, just as well as if you had told me, that you have been grumbling, in response for the want of Cap. But I could not help it, for, to tell the truth, I was pining after her myself, which was the reason that I could not do half justice to the scenes of the Mexican War.

Well, now let us see what Cap. has been doing—what oppressors she has punished—what victims she has delivered—in a word, what new heroic adventures she has achieved.

Well, the trial of Donald Bayne, alias Black Donald, was over. Cap., of course, had been compelled to appear against him. During the whole course of the trial the court-room was crowded with a curious multitude, "from far and near," eager to get sight of the notorious outlaw.

Black Donald, through the whole ordeal, deputed himself with the tallest and joyous dignity, that would have better become a triumph than a trial.

He was indicted upon several distinct counts, the most serious of which—the murder of the solitary widow and her daughter in the forest cabin, and the assassination of Eugene Le Noir in the woods near the Hillside House—were sustained only by circumstantial evidence. But the aggregate weight of all these, together with his very bad reputation, was sufficient to convict him, and Black Donald was sentenced to death.

This dreadful doom, most solemnly pronounced by the judge, was received by the prisoner with a loud laugh, and the words:

"You're out of your reckoning now, cap'n! I never was a saint, the Lord knows, but my hands are free from blood-guiltiness! There's an honest little girl that believes me—don't you?" he said, turning laughingly to our little heroine.

"Yes, I do!" said Cap., bursting into tears; "and I am as sorry for you as ever I can be, Donald Bayne."

"Bother! it is sure to come to this first or last, and I knew it! Now, to prove you do not think this rugged hand of mine stained with blood, give it a friendly shake!" said the condemned man. And before Old Hurricane could prevent her, Capitoula had jumped over two or three intervening seats and climbed up to the side of the dock, and reached up her hand to the prisoner, saying:

"God help you, Donald Bayne, in your great trouble, and I will do all I can to help you in this world. I will go to the Governor myself, and tell him I know you never did any murder."

"Rescue the prisoner," said the judge, peremp-

torily.

The constables approached and led away Black Donald.

Old Hurricane rushed upon Cap., seized her, and shaking her fiercely, exclaimed, under his breath:

"You—you—you—you New York burrah boy! you foundling! you wretch! you vagrant! you brat! you beggar! will you never be a lady! to go and shake hands with that ruffian!"

"Sure, uncle, that's nothing, now; I have shaken hands with you often enough!"

"Demmy, you—you—you New York trash, what do you mean by that?"

"Of course I mean, uncle, that you are as rough a ruffian as ever Donald Bayne was!"

"Demmy, I'll murder you!"

"Don't, uncle; they have an unreviled way here of hanging murderers," said Cap., shaking herself free of Old Hurricane's grasp, and hastening out of the court-room to mount her horse and ride home.

One night after tea, Capitoula and her uncle occupied their usual seats by the little bright wood fire, that the chilly evening and the keen mountain air made agreeable, even in May.

Old Hurricane was smoking his pipe and reading his paper.

Cap. was sitting with her slender fingers around her throat, which she, with a shudder, occasionally compressed.

"Well, that demon, Black Donald, will be hanged the 28th of July," said Old Hurricane, exultingly, "and we shall get rid of one villain, Cap."

"I pity Black Donald, and I can't bear to think of his being hanged! It quite breaks my heart to think that I was compelled to bring him to such a fate!"

"Oh! that reminds me! The reward offered for the apprehension of Black Donald, to which you were entitled, Cap., was paid over to me for you. I placed it to your account in the Agricultural Bank."

"I don't want it! I won't touch it! The price of blood! It would burn my fingers!" said Cap.

"Oh, very well! a thousand dollars won't go a begging," said Old Hurricane.

"Uncle, it breaks my heart to think of Black Donald's execution! It just does! It must be terrible, this hanging! I have put my finger around my throat and squeaked it, to know how it feels, and it is awful! Even a little squeeze makes my head feel as if it would burst, and I have to let go! Oh, it is horrible to think of!"

"Well, Cap., it wasn't intended to be as pleasant as tickling, you know. I wish it was twenty times worse! It would serve him right, the villain! I wish it was lawful to break him on the wheel—I do!"

"Uncle, that is very wicked in you! I declare I won't have it! I'll write a petition to the Governor to commute his sentence, and carry it all around the county myself!"

"You wouldn't get a soul to sign it to save your life, much less his."

"I'll go to the Governor myself, and beg him to pardon Donald Bayne!"

"Ha! ha! ha! the Governor would not do it!

to save all our lives; and if he were to do a ten outrageous thing, he might whistle for his re-election!"

"I declare, Donald Bayne, shall not be hung—and so there!" said Cap., passionately.

"Who-aw! You'll deliver him by the strength of your arm, my little Donna Quixota."

"I'd save him in one way or another, now mind I tell you! He sinned more against me than against anybody else, and so I have the best right of anybody in the world to forgive him, and I do forgive him! And he shan't be hung! I say it!"

"You say it! ha! ha! ha! Who are you, to turn aside the law?"

"I, Capitola Black, say that Donald Bayne, not having deserved to be hung, shall not be hung! And in one way or another I'll keep it word!"

And Cap. did her best to keep it. The next morning she mounted Gyp and rode up to Tip-Top, where she employed the village lawyer to draw up a petition to the Governor for the commutation of Donald Bayne's sentence. And then she rode all over the county to get signatures to the document. But all in vain! People of every age and condition too thoroughly feared and hated the famous outlaw, and too earnestly wished to be entirely and forever rid of him, to sign any petition for a commutation of his sentence. If a petition for his instant execution had been carried around, it would have stood a much better chance of success!

Cap. spent many days in her fruitless enterprise, but at last gave it up—but by no means in despair, for—

"I'll save his life, yet! by one means or another! I can't change clothes with him as I did with Clara, he's too big! but one way or other, I'll save him," said Cap. to herself. She said it to no one else, for the more difficult the enterprise, the more determined she was to succeed, and the more desperate she grew as to her measures.

In the meantime the outlaw, double-ironed, was confined in the condemned cell, the strongest portion of the county jail. All persons were strictly prohibited from visiting him, except certain of the clergy.

They did all they could to prepare the outlaw to a sense of his condition, to prepare him to meet his fate and induce him to make a confession and give up the retract of his band.

And Donald listened to them with respect, acknowledged himself a great sinner, and knelt with them when they knelt to pray for him.

But he denied that he was guilty of the murders for which he had been doomed to die, and he utterly refused to give up his old companions, replying to the ministers in something like these words:

"Poor wretches! they are no more fit to die than I am, and a condemned cell, with the thought of the scaffold before him, are not exactly the most favourable circumstances under which a man might experience sincere repentance, my masters!"

And so, while the convict listened with docility to all that the ministers had to say, he steadily persisted in asserting his own innocence of the crimes for which he was condemned, and in his refusal to deliver up his companions.

Meantime, Capitola, at Old Hurricane's Hall, was doing all she could to discover or invent means to save the life of Black Donald. But still she said no more about it, even to Old Hurricane.

One evening, while Cap. was sitting by the fire with her thoughts busy with this subject, her uncle came in, saying:

"Cap! I have got some curiosities to show you!"

"What are they?" said Cap., languidly.

"A set of burglar's tools, supposed to belong to some member of Black Donald's band! One of my negroes found them in the woods in the neighbourhood of the Devil's Punch Bowl! I wrote to the sheriff concerning them, and he requested me to take care of them until he should have occasion to call for them. Look! did you ever see such things?" said Old Hurricane, setting down a canvas bag upon the table, and turning out from it all sorts of strange-looking instruments—tiny saws, files, punches, screws, picks, etc., etc., etc.

Cap. looked at them with the most curious interest, while Old Hurricane explained their supposed uses.

"It must have been an instrument of this sort, Cap., that that blamed demon, Donald, gave to the imprisoned men to file their fetters off with!" he said showing a thin file of tempered steel.

"That!" said Cap., "and it here! let me see it!" and she examined it with the deepest interest.

"I wonder what they force looks with?" she inquired.

"Why, this, and this, and this!" said Old Hurricane, producing a burglar's pick, saw and chisel. Cap. took them and scrutinized them so attentively that Old Hurricane burst out into a loud laugh, exclaiming:—

"You'll dream of house-breakers to-night, Cap. I!" and taking the tools he put them all back in the little canvas bag, and put the bag up on a high shelf of the parlor closet.

The next morning, while Cap. was arranging flowers on the parlor mantelpiece, Old Hurricane burst in upon her with his hands full of letters and newspapers, and his heart full of exaltation—throwing up his hat and uttering an alarming cry for a man of his age, he exclaimed:—

"Hurrah, Cap. Hurrah! Peace is at last proclaimed and our victorious troops are on their way home! It's all in the newspapers! and here are letters from Herbert, dated from New Orleans! Here are letters for you, and here are some for me! I have not opened them yet!"

"Hurrah, Cap. Hurrah!"

"Hurrah, uncle! Hurrah!" cried Cap., tossing up her flowers and rushing into his arms! "Don't squeeze me into an apoplexy, you little bear," said Old Hurricane, turning purple in the face, from the strange hug of Cap.'s joyful arms. "Come along and sit down with me, at this table, and let us see what the letters have brought us."

They took their seats opposite each other, at a small table, and Old Hurricane threw the whole mail between them, and began to pick out the letters.

"That's for you Cap. This is for me," he said, pitching out two in the handwriting of Herbert Greyson.

Cap. opened hers, and commenced reading. It was in fact Herbert's first downright, practical proposal of marriage, in which he begged that their union might take place as soon as he should return, and that as he had written to his uncle by the same mail, upon another subject, which he did not wish to mix up with his own marriage, she would, upon a proper opportunity, let her uncle know of his plans.

"Upon my word, he takes my consent very coolly as a matter of course, and even forces upon me the disagreeable duty of asking myself of my own uncle! Whichever heard of such proceedings! If he were not coming home from the wars, I declare I should get angry; but I won't get upon my dignity with Herbert,—dear, darling, sweet Herbert!—if it were any body else, shouldn't they know the difference between their little lady and Tom Trotter? However, as it's Herbert, here goes! Now, I suppose the best way to ask myself of uncle, for Herbert, will be just to hand him over this letter. The dear knows it isn't so over-and-above affectionate that I should hesitate. Uncle," said Cap., pulling Old Hurricane's coat-sleeve.

"Don't bother me, Cap.," exclaimed Major Warfield, who sat there holding a large, closely-written document in his hand, with his great round eyes strained from their sockets, as they passed along the lines with devouring interest.

"Well, I do declare! I do believe he has received a proposal of marriage himself," cried Cap., shooting much nearer the truth than she knew.

Old Hurricane did not hear her. Starting up with the document in his hand, he rushed from the room, and went and shut himself up in his own study.

"I vow some widow has offered to marry him," said Cap. to herself.

Old Hurricane did not come to dinner nor to supper. But after supper, when Capitola's wonder was at its climax, and while she was sitting by the little wood fire that the chilly evening required, Old Hurricane came in, looking very unlike himself, in an humble, confused, deprecating, yet happy manner, like one who has at once a mortifying confession to make, and a happy secret to tell.

"Cap.," he said, trying to repress a smile, and growing purple in the face.

"Oh, yes! you've come to tell me, I suppose, that you're going to put a step-aunt-in-law over my head, only you don't know how to announce it," answered Capitola, little knowing how closely she had come to the truth; when to her unbounded astonishment, Old Hurricane answered:—

"Yes, my dear, that's just it!"

"What? My eyes! Oh, cry! cry!" cried Cap., breaking into her newsboy's slang from mere consternation.

"Yes, my dear, it is perfectly true!" replied the old man, growing furiously red, and rubbing his face.

"Oh! oh! oh! Hold me! I'm xnx!" cried Cap., falling back in her chair in an inextinguishable fit of laughter, that shook her whole frame. She laughed until the tears ran down her cheeks. She wiped her eyes and looked at Old Hurricane, and every time she saw his confused and happy face, she burst into a fresh paroxysm that seemed to threaten her life or her reason.

"Who is the happy—? Oh! I can't speak! Oh, I'm killed entirely!" she cried, breaking off in the midst of her question, and falling into fresh convulsions.

"It's no new love, Cap. It's my wife!" said Old Hurricane, wiping his face.

This brought Capitola up with a jerk. She sat bolt upright, gazing at him with her eyes fixed as in death.

"Cap.," said Old Hurricane, growing more and more confused, "I've been a married man more years than I like to think of! Cap. I've—I've a wife and grown-up son!—Why do you sit there staring at me you little demon? Why don't you say something to encourage me, you little wretch!"

"Go on!" said Cap., without removing her eyes.

"Cap., I was—a jealous—passionate—Demmy! confound it isn't in my line! A diabolical villain made me believe that my poor little wife wasn't good!"

"There! I knew you'd lay it on somebody else. Men always do that!" said Cap., to herself.

"He was mortally wounded in Mexico. He made a confession, and confided it to Herbert, who has just sent me an attested copy. It was Le Noir. My poor wife lived under her girlhood's name of Marah Rooke." Old Hurricane made a gulp, and his voice broke down.

Cap. understood all now, as well as if she had known it as long as Old Hurricane had. She comprehended his extreme agitation upon a year ago, when Herbert Greyson had mentioned Marah Rooke's name, and his later and more lasting disturbance upon accidentally meeting Marah at the Orphan's Court.

This revelation filled her with strange and contradictory emotions. She was glad; she was angry with him; she was sorry for him! she was divided between diverse impulses, to hug and kiss him; to cry over him, and to smite him; to give him a good shaking! And between them she did nothing at all.

Old Hurricane was again the first to speak.

"What was that you wished to say to me, Cap. when I ran away from you this morning?"

"Why, uncle, that Herbert wants to follow your example, and—and——" Cap. blushed and broke down.

"I thought as much. Getting married at his age! a boy of twenty-five!" said the veteran in contempt.

"Taking a wife at your age, uncle, an infant of sixty-six!"

"Rather, Cap. I! Let me see the fellow's letter to you!"

Cap. handed it to him and the old man read it.

"If I were to object, you'd get married all the same! Demmy! You're both of age. Do as you please!"

"Thank you, sir," said Cap., deprecatingly.

"And now, Cap., one thing is to be noticed. Herbert says, both in your letter and in mine, that they were to start to return the day after these letters were posted. These letters have been delayed in the mail. Consequently we may expect our hero here every day. But Cap., my

dear, you must receive them. For to-morrow morning, please the Lord, I shall set out for Staunton and Willow Heights, and go and kneel down at the feet of my wife, and ask her pardon on my knees!"

Cap. was no longer divided between the wish to pull Old Hurricane's gray beard and to cry over him. She threw herself at once into his arms and exclaimed:—

"Oh uncle! God bless you! God bless you! God bless you! It has come very late in life, but you may be happy with her through all the ages of eternity!"

Old Hurricane was deeply moved by the sympathy of his little madcap, and pressed her to his bosom, saying:—

"Cap., my dear, if you had not set your heart upon Herbert, you would marry you to my son Travers, and you two should inherit all that I have in the world! But never mind, Cap., you have an inheritance of your own! Cap., my dear, did it ever occur to you that you might have had a father and a mother?"

"Yes! often! But I used to think you were my father, and that my mother was dead."

"I wish to the Lord that I had been your father, Cap., and that Marah Rooke had been your mother! But Cap., your father was a better man than I, and your mother as good a woman as Marah. And Cap., my dear, you vagabond, you vagrant, you brat, you beggar, you are the sole heiress of the Hidden House estate, and all its enormous wealth! What do you think of that now? What do you think of that, you beggar?" cried Old Hurricane.

A shriek pierced the air, and Capitola starting up, stood before Old Hurricane, crying in an impassioned voice:—

"Uncle! Uncle! don't mock me! don't overwhelm me! I do not care for wealth or power; but tell me of my parents, who possessing both, cast off their unfortunate child—a girl, too! to meet the sufferings and perils of such a life as mine had been if I had not met you."

"Cap., my dear, hush! your parents were no more to blame for their seeming abandonment of you, than I was to blame for the desertion of my poor wife. We are all the victims of one villain who has now gone to his account, Capitola. I mean Gabriel Le Noir. Sit down my dear, and I will read the copy of his whole confession, and afterwards, in addition tell you all I know upon the subject!"

Capitola resumed her seat, and Major Warfield read the confession of Gabriel Le Noir, and afterwards continued the subject by relating the events of that memorable Hallow Eve when he was called out in a snow-storm, to take the dying deposition of the nurse who had been abducted with the infant Capitola.

And at the end of his narrative, Cap. knew as much of her own history as the reader has known all along.

"And I have a mother and I shall even see her soon! you told me she was coming home with the party—did you not, Uncle," said Capitola.

"Yes, my child. Only think of it! I saved the daughter from the streets of New York, and my son saved the mother from her prison at the madhouse! And now, my dear Cap. I must bid you good night and go to bed, for I intend to rise to-morrow morning long before daylight, to ride to Tip Top to meet the Staunton stage," said the old man, kissing Capitola.

Just as he was about to leave the room, he was arrested by a loud ringing and knocking at the door.

Wool was heard running along the front hall to answer the summons.

"Cap., I shouldn't wonder much if that was our party. I wish it may be, for I should like to welcome them before I leave home to fetch my wife," said Old Hurricane, in a voice of agitation.

"And while they were still eagerly listening, the door was thrown open by Wool who announced:—

"Marah Herbert, which I mean to say, Major Herbert Greyson," and Herbert entered and was grasped by the two hands of Old Hurricane, who exclaimed:—

"Ah, Herbert, my lad! I have got your letters! It is all right, Herbert, or going to be so. You shall marry Cap. when you like. And I am going

to-morrow morn of my wife."

"No need need. Let me want, and then," said Herbert, kissing his fervent

frank kiss. "Capitola!"

"Every since it all over again."

"Yes! and but first, I must Herbert, kissing

to Old Hurricane."

"You need took Staunton Clara along—door—"

And the new wife of Major Old Hurricane claiming it as

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Meanwhile Mrs. Le Noir Frenchwoman daughter, and

Cap. gave pale woman love, and then

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to-morrow morning to throw myself at the feet
of my wife."

"No need of your going so far, dear sir, no
need. Let me speak to my own dear girl a mo-
ment, and then I shall have something to say to
you," said Herbert, leaving the old man in sus-
pense, and going to salute Capitola, who returned
his fervent embraces by an honest, downright
frank kiss, that made no secret of itself.

"Capitola! My uncle has told you all!"
"Every single bit! No need of time by telling
it all over again! Is my mother with you?"

"Yes! and I will bring her in, in one moment;
but first, I must bring in some one else," said
Herbert, kissing the hand of Capitola and turning to
Old Hurricane, to whom he said:

"You need not travel far to find Marah. We
took Stanton in our way, and brought her and
Clara along—Traverse!" he said, going to the
door—"bring in your mother."

"And the next instant, Traverse entered with the
wife of Major Warfield upon his arm."

Old Hurricane started forward to meet her, ex-
claiming in a broken voice:

"Marah, my dear Marah, God may forgive me,
but can you—can you ever do so!" and he would
have sunk at her feet, but that she prevented, by
meeting him silently placing both her hands in his.

And so quietly Marah's forgiveness was ex-
pressed, and the reconciliation sealed.

Meanwhile Herbert went out, and brought in
Mrs. Le Noir and Clara. Mrs. Le Noir, with a
Frenchwoman's impetuosity, hurried to her daugh-
ter, and clasped her to her heart.

Cap. gave one hurried glance at the beautiful
pale woman that claimed from her a daughter's
love, and then, returning the caress, she said:

"Oh, mamma! Oh, mamma! If I were only a
boy instead of a girl, I would thrash that Le Noir
within an inch of his life!—But I forgot he is
gone to his account."

Old Hurricane was at this moment shaking
hands with his son, Traverse, who presently took
occasion to lead up and introduce his betrothed
wife, Clara Day, to her destined father-in-law.

Major Warfield received her with all a soldier's
gallantry, a gentleman's courtesy, and a father's
tenderness.

He next shook hands with his old acquaintance,
Mrs. Le Noir.

And then supper was ordered, and the evening
was passed in general and conversative reminis-
cences and cheerful conversation.

CHAPTER LXI.

"THERE SHALL BE LIGHT AT THE EVENING."

—Holy Bible.

They shall be blessed exceedingly; their store

Grow daily, weekly more and more,

And peace so multiply around.

Their very hearts seem holy ground.

—MARY HOWITT.

The marriage of Capitola and Herbert, and that
of Clara and Traverse, was fixed to take place
upon the first of August, which was the twenty-
first birth-day of the doctor's daughter, and also
the twenty-fifth anniversary of the wedding of
Mrs. Warfield and Marsh Booke.

German husbands and wives have a beautiful
custom of keeping the twenty-fifth anniversary of
their marriage by a festival which they call the
"Silver Wedding." And thus Major Warfield
and Marah resolved to keep this first of August,
and farther to honor the occasion by uniting the
hands of their young people.

There was but one cloud upon the happiness
of Capitola; this was the approaching execution
of Black Donald.

No one else seemed to care about the matter,
until a circumstance occurred which painfully
aroused their interest.

It was the fact that the Governor, through
the solicitation of certain ministers of the Gos-
pel, who represented the condemned as utterly
unprepared to meet his fate, had respited him
until the first of August, at which time, he wished
the prisoner to be made to understand that his
sentence would certainly, without farther delay,
be carried into effect.

This caused a sort of consternation into the
heart of every member of the Hurricane Hall
household!

The idea of Black Donald being hung in their
immediate neighborhood upon their wedding-day
was appalling!

Yet there was no help for it, unless their
wedding was postponed to another occasion than
that upon which Old Hurricane had set his heart.

No one knew what to do.
Cap. fretted herself almost sick. She had cud-
gelled her brains to no purpose. She had not
been able to think of any plan by which she could
deliver Black Donald. Meantime the last days of
July were rapidly passing away.

Black Donald in the condemned cell maintained
his firmness, resolutely asserting his innocence
of any capital crime, and persistently refusing
to give up his band.

As a last motive of con-
fession, the paper written by Gabriel Le Noir
upon his death-bed was shown him. He laugh-
ed a loud, crackling laugh, and said *that* was
all true, but that he, for his part, never had
intended to learn a hair of Capitola's head;
that he had taken a fancy to the girl when he
had first seen her, and had only wanted to
carry her off and force her into a marriage
with himself; that he had pretended to consent
to her death only for the purpose of saving her
life.

When Cap. heard this she burst into tears, and
said she believed it was true!

The night before the wedding of Capitola and
Herbert, and Clara and Traverse, and of the
execution of Black Donald, came.

At Hurricane Hall, the two prospective bride-
grooms were busy with Old Hurricane over
papers that had to be prepared in the
library.

The two intended brides were engaged, under
the direction of Mrs. Warfield, in her dressing-
room, consulting over certain properties of the
approaching festival. But Capitola could give
only a half attention to the discussion. Her
thoughts were with the poor condemned man
who was to die the next day.

And suddenly she flew out of the room, sum-
moned her groom, mounted her horse, and rode
away.

In his condemned cell Black Donald was bit-
terly realizing how unprepared he was to die, and
how utterly impossible it was for him to pre-
pare in the short hours left.

He tried to pray, but could form no other position than that
he might be allowed, if possible, a little longer
to fit himself to meet his Creator. From his cell
he could hear the striking of the great clock in
the prison hall. And as every hour struck, it
seemed "a nail driven in his coffin."

At eight o'clock that night the warden sat in
his little office, consulting the sheriff about some
details of the approaching execution. While
they were still in discussion, a turnkey opened
the door, saying:

"A lady to see the warden."

And Capitola stood before them!

"Miss Black!" exclaimed both sheriff and war-
den, rising in surprise, gazing upon our heroine,
and addressing her by the name under which they
had first known her.

"Yes, gentlemen, it is I. The truth is I can-
not rest to-night without saying a few words of
comfort to the poor man who is to die to-morrow."

So to come hither, attended by my groom, to know
if I may see him for a few minutes."

"Miss Black, here is the sheriff. It is just as
he pleases. My orders were so strict that had
you come to me alone I should have been
obliged to refuse you."

"Mr. Keefe, you will not refuse me," said
Capitola, turning to the sheriff.

"Miss Black, my rule is to admit no one but
the officers of the prison and the ministers of
the Gospel to see the condemned! This we
have been obliged to observe as a measure of
safety. This convicts, as you are aware, is a
man of consummate cunning, so that it is really
wonderful he has not found means to make his
escape, closely as he has been watched and
strongly as he has been guarded."

"Ah, but Mr. Keefe, his cunning was no
match for mine, you know!" said Capitola,
smiling.

"He-he-ha! so it was not! You took him
very cleverly! I very cleverly, indeed! In fact,
if it had not been for you, I doubt if ever we
should have captured Black Donald at all. The
authorities are entirely indebted to you for the

capture of this notorious outlaw. And really
that being the case, I do think it would be
straining a point to refuse you admittance to
see him! So, Miss Black, you have my author-
ity for visiting the condemned man in his cell
and giving him all the comfort you can. I
would attend you thither myself, but I have got
to go to see the captain of a militia company to be
on the scene of action to-morrow," said the
sheriff, who soon after took leave of the warden
and departed.

The warden then called a turnkey and ordered
him to attend Miss Black to the condemned cell.

The young turnkey took up a lamp and a great
key and walked before, leading the way down
stairs to a cell in the interior of the basement,
occupied by Black Donald.

He unlocked the door, admitted Capitola, and
then walked off to the extremity of the lobby as
he was accustomed to do when he let in the
preachers.

Capitola thanked heaven for the chance, for
had he not done so she would have had to invent
some excuse of getting rid of him.

She entered the cell. It was very dimly light-
ed from the great lamp that hung in the lobby
nearly opposite the cell door.

By its light she saw Black Donald, not only
doubly ironed but confined by a chain and staple
to the wall. He was very pale and haggard from
long imprisonment and great anxiety.

Cap's heart bled for the poor banded and
blighted outlaw, who had not a friend in the
world to speak a kind word to him in his trouble.

He also recognized her, and rising and coming
to meet her as far as the length of the chain
would permit, he held out his hand and said:

"I am very glad you have come, little one.
It is very kind of you to come and see a poor
fellow in his extremity! You are the first female
that has been in this cell since my imprisonment."

Think of that, child! I wanted to see you, too!
I wanted to say to you yourself again, that I
never was guilty of murder, and that I only
seemed to consent to your death to save you!

Life! Do you believe this?—On the word of
a dying man it is truth!"

"I do believe you, Donald Bayne," said Capi-
tola, in a broken voice.

"I hear that you have come into your estate!
I am glad of it. And they tell me that you are
going to be married to-morrow! Well! God bless
you, little one!"

"Oh, Donald Bayne! Can you say God bless
me, when it was I who put you here?"

"Tut, child, we outlaws bear no malice! Split
is a civilized vice! It was a fair contest, child,
and you conquered! It's well you did! Give
me your hand in good will, when I must die to-
morrow!"

Capitola gave her hand, and while he held it,
she stooped and said:

"Donald! I have done everything in the world
to save your life!"

"I know you have, child. May yours be long
and happy."

"Donald, may your life be longer and better
than you think. I have tried all other means of
saving you in vain; there is but one means left."

The outlaw started violently, exclaiming:

"Is there one?"

"Donald, yes! there is! I bring you the
means of deliverance and escape. Heaven knows
whether I am doing right—for I do not. I know
many people would blame me very much, but I
hope that He who forgave the thief upon the cross
and the sinful woman at His feet, will not condemn
me for following His own compassionate ex-
ample. For Donald, as I was the person whom
you injured most of all others, so I consider that
I of all the others have the greatest right to pardon
you and set you free. Oh, Donald! use all the
life I am about to give you, and I shall be char-
geable with every future sin you commit!"

"In the name of mercy, do not hold out a false
hope. I had nerved myself to die."

"But you were not prepared to meet your
maker. Oh, Donald! I hold out no false hope!

Listen, for I must speak low and quick—I could
never be heard again, if, on my wedding day, you
should die a felon's death. Here I have a tool
with the use of which you must be acquainted, for
they were found in the woods near the Hidden
House!" said Capitola, producing from her
pockets a burglar's lock-pick, saw, chisel, file, etc.

Black Donald seized them as a famished wolf might seize his prey.

"Will, they do?" inquired Capitola, in breathless anxiety.

"Yes! yes! yes! I can file off my iron, pick every lock, drive back every bolt, and dislodge every bar between myself and freedom with these instruments! But, child, there is one thing you have forgotten: suppose a turnkey or a guard should stop me?—you have brought me no revolver!"

Capitola turned pale.

"Donald, I could easily have brought you a revolver; but I would not, even to save you from to-morrow's death. No, Donald! no! I give you the means of freeing yourself, if you can do it, as you may, without bloodshed. But, Donald, though your life is not justly forfeited, your liberty is, and so I cannot give you the means of taking any one's life for the sake of saving your own."

"You are right," said the outlaw.

"Listen, further, Donald. Here are a thousand dollars. I thought never to have taken it from the bank, for I would never have used the price of blood. But I drew it to-day for you. Take it—it will help you to live a better life. When you have picked your way out of this place, go to the great elm tree at the back of the old mill, and you will find my horse, Gyp, whom I shall have tied there. He is very swift—mount him and ride. Use your life to the nearest airport, and so escape by a road to some foreign country. And oh! try to lead a good life, and may God redeem you, Donald Bayne! There! I conceal your tools and money quickly, for I hear the guard coming. Good-bye! and again,—God redeem you, Donald Bayne!"

"God bless you, brave and tender girl! And God forsake me if I do not best to your advice!" said the outlaw, pressing the hand she gave him, while the tears rushed to his eyes.

The guard approached, Capitola turned to meet him. They left the cell together, and Black Donald was looked in for the last time.

"O! I hope, I pray that he may get off! O, what shall I do if he doesn't! How can I enjoy my wedding to-morrow! How can I hear the music, and the dancing, and the rejoicing, when I know that a fellow-creature is in such a strait! Oh! Lord grant that Black Donald may get clear off to-night, for he isn't fit to die!" said Cap. to herself as she hurried out of the prison.

Her young groom was waiting for her, and she mounted her horse and rode until they got to the old haunted church, at the end of the village, when, drawing rein, she said:

"Jem, I am very tired. I will wait here, and you must just ride back to the village, Mr. Cassell's livery stable, and get a gig, and put your horse into it, and come back here to drive me home, for I cannot ride."

Jem, who never questioned his imperious little mistress's orders, rode off at once to do her bidding.

Cap. immediately dismounted from her pony, and led him under the deep shadows of the elm tree, where she fastened him. Then taking his face between her hands, and looking him in the eyes, she said:

"Gyp, my son, you and I have had many a frolic together, but we've got to part now! It almost breaks my heart, Gyp, but it is to save a fellow creature's life, and my can't be helped! He'll treat you well, for he isn't, dear Gyp. Gyp! he'll part with his life sooner than sell you! Good-bye dear, dear Gyp!"

Gyp took all these caresses in a very nonchalant manner, only snoring and pawing in reply.

Presently the boy came back, bringing the gig. Cap. once more hugged Gyp about the neck, pressed her cheek against his mane, and with a whispered "Good-bye, dear Gyp," sprang into the gig, and ordered the boy to drive home.

"An' lead the pony, Miss?"

"Oh yes, for the present; everybody knows Gyp,—no one will steal him. I have left him length of line enough to move around a little and eat grass, drink from the brook, or lie down. You can come after him early to-morrow morning."

The little groom thought this a queer arrangement, but he was not in the habit of criticising his young mistress's actions.

Capitola got home to a late supper, and to the anxious inquiries of her friends she replied that

she had been to the prison to take leave of Black Donald, and begged that they would not pursue so painful a subject. And, in respect to Cap.'s sympathies, they changed the conversation.

That night the remnant of Black Donald's band were assembled in their first old haunt, the Old Road Inn. They had met for a two-fold purpose—to bury their old matron, Mother Baven, who, since the death of her patron and the apprehension of her Captain, had returned to the inn to die; and to bewail the fate of their leader, whose execution was expected to come off the next day.

The men laid the poor old woman in her woodland grave, and assembled in the kitchen to keep a death-watch in sympathy with their "unfortunate" Captain. They gathered around the table, and foaming mugs of ale were freely quaffed, for "sorrow's dry" they said. But neither laugh, song, nor jest attended their draughts. Suddenly, in the midst of their heavy grief and utter silence, a familiar sound was heard—a ringing footstep under the back windows.

And the next instant the door was flung wide open, and the outlaw chief stood among them! Hal leaped forward and flung himself around Black Donald's neck, exclaiming:

"It's you! it's you! it's you! my dear! my darling! my adored! my sweetheart! my prince! my lord! my king! my dear, dear Captain!"

Steve, the lazy mulatto, rolled down upon the floor at his master's feet, and embraced them in silence.

While Demon Dick growled forth—

"How the foul fiend did you get out?"

"Not by any help of yours, boys! But don't think I reproach you, lads! Well I know that you could do nothing on earth to save me! No one on earth could have helped me except the one who really freed me—Capitola!"

"That girl again!" exclaimed Hal, in the extremity of wonder.

"It's to be hoped, then, you've got her at last, Captain," said Demon Dick.

"No—Heaven bless her!—she's in better hands. Now listen, lads, for I must talk fast! I have already lost a good deal too much time. I went first to the cave in the Punch Bowl, and not finding you there, came here at a venture, where I am happy to meet you for the last time—for to-night we disband forever!"

"Twas our intention, Captain," said Hal, in a melancholy voice.

Black Donald then threw himself into a seat at the head of the table, poured out a mug of ale, and invited his band to pledge him. They gathered around the table, filled their mugs, pledged him standing, and then resumed their seats to listen to the last words of their chief.

Black Donald commenced and related the manner of his deliverance by Capitola; and then taking from his bosom a bag of gold, he poured it upon the table and divided it into two equal portions, one of which he handed to "Headlong Hal," saying—

"There, Hal, take that and divide it among your companions, and scatter to distant parts of the country, where you may yet have a chance of earning an honest livelihood! As for me, I shall have to quit the country altogether, and it will take nearly half this sum to enable me to do it. Now I shall have not a minute more to give you! So once more pledge your Captain, and away!"

The men filled their mugs, rose to their feet, and pledged their leader in a parting toast, and then—

"Good luck to you all!" exclaimed Black Donald, waving his hat thrice above his head with a valdettorio hurrah. And the next moment he was gone!

That night, if any watchman had been on guard near the stables of Hurricane Hall, he might have seen a tall man mounted upon Capitola's pony, ride up in hot haste, dismount and pick the stable lock, take Gyp by the bridle and lead him in, and presently return leading out Fleetfoot, Old Hurricane's racer, upon which he mounted and rode away.

The next morning, while Capitola was dressing, her groom rapped at the door and, in great dismay, begged that he might speak to Miss Cap. one minute.

"Well what is it, Jem?" said Capitola.

"Oh, Miss Cap., you'll kill me! I done been got up long afore day and gone to Tip-Top arter Gyp; but somebody done been stole him away afore I got there!"

"Thank Heaven!" cried Capitola, to little Jem's unspeakable amazement. For to Capitola the absence of her horse meant just the escape of Black Donald!

The next minute Cap. sighed and said:

"Poor Gyp! I shall never see you again!"

That was all she knew of the future. That morning while they were all at breakfast, a groom from the stable came in, with a little canvas bag in his hand, which he laid, with a bow, before his master.

Major Warfield took it up; it was full of gold, and upon its side was written, in red chalk:

"Three hundred dollars, to pay for Fleetfoot, Black Donald, Reformed Robber."

While Old Hurricane was reading this inscription, the groom said that Fleetwood was missing from his stall, and that Miss Cap.'s pony, that was supposed to have been stolen, was found in his place, with this bag of gold tied around his neck.

"It is Black Donald! he has escaped!" cried Old Hurricane, about to fling himself into a rage, when his furious eyes encountered the gentle gaze of Marah, that fell like oil on the waves of his rising passion.

"Let him go! I'll not storm on my silver wedding-day," said Major Warfield.

As for Cap., her eyes danced with delight; the only little clouds upon her bright sky were removed. Black Donald had escaped to commence a better life, and Gyp was restored!

That evening a magnificent, old-fashioned wedding came off at Hurricane Hall.

The double ceremony was performed by the bishop of the diocese, then on a visit to the neighborhood, in the great saloon of Hurricane Hall, in the presence of as large and splendid an assembly as could be gathered together from that remote neighborhood.

The two brides, of course, were lovely in white satin, honiton lace, pearls and orange flowers. "Equally," of course, the bridegrooms were handsome and elegant, proud and happy.

To this old-fashioned wedding succeeded a round of dinners and evening-parties given by the wedding guests. And when all these old-time customs had been observed for the satisfaction of old friends, the bridal party went upon the new-fashioned tour for their own delight. They spent a year in travelling over the Eastern Continent, and then returned home to settle upon their patrimonial estates.

Major Warfield and Marah live at Hurricane Hall, and as his heart is satisfied and at rest, his temper is gradually improving. As the loc shall be led by the little child, Old Hurricane is led by the gentlest woman that ever loved or understood, and she is leading him in his old age to the Saviour's feet.

Clara and Traverse live at Willow Heights, which has been repaired, enlarged and improved, and where Travero has already an extensive practice, and where both endeavour to emulate the enlightened goodness of the sainted Doctor Day.

Cap. and Horbert, with Mrs. Le Noir, live at the Hidden House, which has been turned by wealth and taste into a dwelling of light and beauty. As the bravest are always the gentlest, so the most high-spirited are always the most forgiving. And thus the weak or wicked old Dorcas Knight still finds a home under the roof of Mrs. Le Noir. Her only retribution being the very fact that her temporary prisoner is now her mistress and sovereign lady.

I wish I could say "they all lived happy ever after." But the truth is, I have reason to suppose that even Clara had sometimes occasion to administer to Doctor Rocks dignified curtain lectures, which no doubt did him good. And I know for a positive fact, that our Cap. sometimes gives her "dear, darling, sweet Horbert," the benefit of the sharp edge of her tongue, which, of course he deserves.

But notwithstanding all this, I am happy to say that they all enjoy a fair amount of human felicity.

THE END.

IRVING'S FIVE CENT MUSIC.

- Mollie Darling
 1 I have no Home
 2 Father says I May
 3 Come sit by my Side, Little Darling
 4 Mollie's Answer
 5 Birdie has Come
 6 Strolling on the Sands
 7 Little Sunshine
 8 Come, Birdie, Come
 9 Come again To-morrow Night
 10 How the Gates Came Ajar
 11 Led Astray
 12 I'm waiting, my Darling, for Thee
 13 Little Footstep
 14 Whip-poor-Will's Song
 15 Silver Threads among the Gold
 16 Little Sweetheart, come and Kiss Me
 17 "Please, God, make room for a little Boy"
 18 When Silver Locks Replace the Gold
 19 When Little Marnie Died
 20 Little Daisy
 21 The Mulligan Guard
 22 Little Mollie Brown
 23 Little May
 24 Mother, is the Old Home lonely?
 25 You are always Young to Me
 26 Tim Flaherty
 27 "Father, bring Home your Money"
 28 Nearer the Beautiful Gates
 29 Gently down the Stream of Time
 30 Our Good Old Friends
 31 Come Back to Erin
 32 Skidmore Guard
 33 The Little Old Cabin in the Lane
 34 The Old Musician and his Harp
 35 Pull Down the Blind
 36 "Only"
 37 Gathering Shells from the Sea Shore
 38 Would I were with Thee
 39 A Starry Night for a Ramble
 40 The Little Brown Jug
 41 Ninety and Nine
 42 Over the Hill to the Poor House
 43 "We'd better Ride a Wee"
 44 Pass under the Rod
 45 The Little Ones at Home
 46 Little Stars are Brightly Shining
 47 Cantilena
 48 The Three Angel Visitants
 49 The Three Calls
 50 Dare to do Right
 51 Whisper Softly, Mother's Dying
 52 Do not Turn me from Your Door
 53 There's a Letter in the Candle
 54 Beautiful Girl of Kildare
 55 Must we then Meet as Strangers?
 56 Amber Tresses tied in Blue
 57 "The Gates are Wide Open"
 58 My love to All at Home
 59 I know, Love, You'll be True
 60 Down Among the Sugar Cane
 61 Hildebrandt Montrose
 62 Have I not been Kind to Thee?
 63 Nobody's Darling but Mine
 64 Pretty as a Picture
 65 Ellen Adams
 66 Don't you cry, Nora Darling
 67 Old Black Joe
 68 My poor Heart is sad with its Dreaming
 69 Sweetest Love, I'll not Forget
 70 Write to me Often
 71 Dreaming of Home and Mother
 72 'Twas the Master that knocked
 73 Tommy, make Room for your Uncle
 74 Old Folks at Home

- ...raining back to Georgia
 ...What were all the World without Thee
 ...He holds the Fort of Heaven
 79 Don't leave Grandmother now she's old
 80 Dot Lendie Yawcob Strauss
 81 Ellie Rhee
 82 To-day and To-morrow
 83 Far Away
 84 Dublin Bay
 85 Kathleen Mavourneen
 86 When the Mists have Rolled away
 87 Touch me Gently, Father Time
 88 The Sweet Sunny Smile of My Darling
 89 The Little Blonde in Blue
 90 Little Bright Eyes at the Window
 91 Wait till the Moonlight Falls
 92 Sleep, my little Blue-eyed Treasure
 93 Down the Shadowed Lane she goes
 94 See that my Grave's kept Green
 95 "That Husband of Mine"
 96 Are we Forgotten when we're Gone?
 97 Speak to Me
 98 Mary Aileen
 99 Sadie Ray
 100 "You and I"
 101 Grandfather's Clock
 102 Only Speak kindly to Me
 103 Haunting Eyes
 104 Angels meet me at the Cross-roads
 105 I know You'll be true to Me, Robin
 106 Silver Stars are softly Gleaming
 107 Sweet Genevieve
 108 Bright Rays of Early Morning
 109 Beautiful Isle of the Sea
 110 That Song of Thine
 111 Under the Oaks
 112 Driven from Home
 113 Birdie, tell Winnie I'm Waiting
 114 "Canada"
 115 Where the Woodbine Twines
 116 Don't be Sorrowful Darling
 117 Put Me in my Little Bed
 118 The Old Man's Drunk Again
 119 Moet and Chandon
 120 Castles in the Air
 121 As Good as Gold
 122 In her Little Bed we Laid Her
 123 Oh, ain't He Sweet on Me!
 124 You know how it is Yourself
 125 Take Me to the Ball to-night
 126 Let Me Be
 127 Save the Boy
 128 Gone Before
 129 The Man o' Air
 130 Paving the Way
 131 Jerusalem the Golden
 132 Nobody's Darling
 133 Her Bright Smile haunts me Still
 134 Jenny who Lives in the Doll
 135 Secrets
 136 Drifting
 137 I love the Merry Sunshine
 138 Annie o' the Banks o' Dee
 139 Maggie's Welcome
 140 Riding in a Pullman Car
 141 Beware
 142 Kathleen's Answer
 143 Five o'Clock in the Morning
 144 Beautiful Nell
 145 The Merriest Girl that's Out
 146 Birds will come Again
 147 Still I Love Thee
 148 Why was I Looking out?
 149 Baby's Gone
 150 Stealing a Kiss at the Garden Gate

- No.
 151 Darling Desale of the Lea
 152 Kiss me and I'll go to Sleep
 153 Call her Back and Kiss Her
 154 As She went Passing By
 155 Good Evening
 156 Standing on the Platform waiting for
 157 Mother, take Me home Again
 158 Birdie You Must Never Tell
 159 Little Emily
 160 Stay of the Evening
 161 The Roman Fall
 162 Hope
 163 'Tis but a little Faded Flower
 164 Don't You go, Tommy
 165 Make believe I'm Dreaming
 166 The Regular Army, O
 167 Nancy Lee
 168 Sweet Bye and Bye
 169 Till the Clouds go By
 170 Will mother know me in the Sky?
 171 Homeless To-night
 172 The Man in the Moon was Looking
 173 Angela Whisper soft Good-Night
 174 Will you Love Me when I'm Old?
 175 Linger near me, Little Darling
 176 Kiss and Forget, Love
 177 Baby Mine
 178 Softly sing the Old Songs
 179 Loved Ones Far Away
 180 When Leaflets from the Roses fall
 181 Adieu Sweetheart, but not Good-Bye
 182 I'll be watching for you at the Window
 183 We shall Meet all the Little Ones There
 184 Dear Little Colleen
 185 Take this Letter to my Mother,
 186 I'm Gwine back to Dixie
 187 Why does Mother stay so long?
 188 Dear Little Isle Far Away
 189 A Little Bow of Blue
 190 The Old Home ain't what it used to be
 191 Where the Moonbeams love to smile
 192 Twenty-seven Cents
 193 Barney, Don't Forget
 194 The Vine-Covered Cottage
 195 Slavery Days
 196 The Campbells are Coming
 197 Brannigan's Band
 198 Sleeping 'Neath the Fair Spring Flowers
 199 The Water Mill
 200 Jim Flak
 201 Dreaming and Drifting
 202 I've only been Down to the Club
 203 Whoa, Emma
 204 The Gray Hairs of my Mother
 205 Little Sister's gone to Sleep
 206 O! Saviour of the World
 207 Eval
 208 Juanita
 209 Darling Minnie Lee
 210 Killarney
 211 I Cannot Sing the Old Songs
 212 Strangers Yet
 213 The Babies on our Block
 214 Golden Years are passing by
 215 Sweet Mary Ann
 216 Kathleen Aroon
 217 A Flower from Mother's Grave
 218 The Little Spring Beside my Home
 219 Somebody's Coming
 220 Marie Lauren
 221 Now Lay me down to Sleep
 222 The Whip-poor-Will
 223 Are you there Morality?
 224 Shells we Gathered Years Ago
 225 Sequel to Grandfather's Clock

No.

206 Thinking and Dreaming of Mother
 207 Shadows on the Floor
 208 The Old Wooden Rocker
 209 Remember you have Children
 210 My Pretty Red Rose
 211 Bittula McGowan
 212 The Little Widow Dunn
 213 Robin, tell Kitty I'm coming
 214 Jennie, the Pride of Kildare
 215 No Work
 216 Don't Forget me, Darling
 217 Uncle Tom's Lament
 218 The Tar's Farewell
 219 In the Morning by the Bright Light
 220 Angel Gabriel
 221 God bless my dear old Mother
 222 Carry me back to old Virginny
 223 Oh! dem Golden Slippers
 224 The Rain upon the Roof
 225 Take Me Home
 226 Drifting with the Tide
 227 The Poor old Tramp
 228 Keep Pretty Flowers on my Grave
 229 My Home on the Old Ohio
 230 Will you Remember me?
 231 The Old Log Cabin in the Dell
 232 Roses Underneath the Snow
 233 Kathleen of Kilkenny
 234 When You and I were young, Maggie
 235 Good old Jeff, or the Poor old Slave
 236 The Golden Stair
 237 We parted by the River Side
 238 The Ring my Mother Wore
 239 Ring the Bell, Watchman
 240 Nora O'Neal
 241 Grandmother's Chair
 242 You've been a Friend to me
 243 The Cottage By the Sea
 244 Norah, the Pride of Kildare
 245 O, Mother come back to your Boy
 246 Frer as the Air
 247 The Day when you'll Forget me
 248 He never Smiled Again
 249 The Maple Leaf, our Emblem Dear
 250 Barney Macree
 251 In the Gloaming
 252 When Jamie comes over the Sea
 253 Fairy Footsteps Gently Falling
 254 Kiss me, and Call me your Darling
 255 The Old Chimney Corner
 256 A Sweet Face at the Window
 257 How I Miss those Little Footsteps
 258 Draw aside the Curtain, Mother
 259 Little Jessie
 260 Beautiful Dreamer
 261 Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Stars
 262 Died in the Streets
 263 Yatie and Lizzie Louvins
 264 The Skids are out to-day
 265 'Tis Darkest just before the day
 266 Bonnie Sweet Bessie, the Maid of Dundee
 267 Little Rosebud
 268 I'll go back to Erin
 269 When we meet in the Sweet Bye and Bye
 270 Oh, The Darkest home am Lonely
 271 McSorley's Twins
 272 The Cows are in the Corn
 273 Meet me at Twilight
 274 Sing to me, Robin
 275 Climbing the Golden Stair
 276 One more River to Cross
 277 Oh, Nanny, wilt thou Gang wi' me
 278 Has Father been Here?
 279 Aileen Aroon
 280 Let your Tears kiss the Flowers
 281 Come o'er the Lake
 282 The Old man ain't what he used to be
 283 Daffney, do you love me?
 284 These Bones shall rise Again
 285 The Dream of Love is o'er
 286 On the Banks of the Beautiful River
 287 Time may Steal the Roses, Darling
 288 Let the Dead and the Beautiful Rest
 289 Dancing in the Barn
 290 Homeless and Alone To-Night
 291 De Golden Wedding
 292 Break the News Gently to Mother
 293 De Huckleberry Picnic
 294 Drifting Down to Sea
 295 Love's Chidings
 296 Hannah, Boil that Cabbage Down
 297 Shivering and Shaking up in the Cold

De day I was Not Pres

298 Lay aside the Little Shoes and Stockings
 299 Where Pretty Violets Grow
 300 I'll see that you Grave is Kept Green
 301 Woe it, Billy
 302 Put on my Long White Robe
 303 The Order of Faith Mosaic
 304 The Twilight Coterie
 305 Twickenham Ferry
 306 Jim, the Carter Lad
 307 The Meanest Folks on our Block
 308 Miss Gruber's Boarding House
 309 The Lastest Man in all the Town
 310 Broken Down
 311 Nestle me close to your heart
 312 The Marchioness
 313 I've no Mother
 314 What is it?
 315 Something Sweet to Think of
 316 Fritz's Lullaby
 317 Father's Growing Old
 318 Scotch Lassie Jean
 319 Cradle's Smoky, Baby's Goss
 320 Over the Garden Wall
 321 Oh, Tom, tell Them to Stop
 322 I'll bet you a Dollar you don't
 323 High-Water Pants
 324 Wheel the Baby Out
 325 John Riley's always Dry
 326 My Mother's Dear Old Face
 327 A Violet from Mother's Grave
 328 Third Degree Full Moon
 329 The Little German Home across the Sea
 330 The Boston Fire
 331 Down amid the Clust'ring Roses
 332 There are Kisses waiting for Me
 333 Norah Mavourneen
 334 You Can't Always Tell
 335 Only to see Her Face Again
 336 My Angel Mother
 337 Don't you Miss the Train
 338 Out of Work
 339 I'm Glad my Heart's my Ain
 340 Keep in the Middle of the Road
 341 Mother Kissed me in my Lullaby
 342 Only a Rose from Mother's Grave
 343 When the Flowers fall Asleep
 344 Finnegan and his Plute
 345 Mollie Mavourneen
 346 Pretty Little South Carolina Rose
 347 Only an Ivy Leaf
 348 What is Home without a Mother?
 349 Thou hast wounded the Spirit that Loved
 350 Home Again
 351 Shining Curia of Gold
 352 Shells upon the Shore
 353 The Old Cabin Home
 354 Saxors in the Air
 355 I'll Remember You in my Prayers
 356 Little Wife Nellie, the light of my Home
 357 When the Leaves begin to Turn
 358 Your Lassie Will be True
 359 In the Evening by the Moonlight
 360 Never take the Horse-shoe from the Door
 361 Mulligan's Funeral
 362 The Dying Nun
 363 Keep dem Golden Gates Wide Open
 364 "Where are the Angels, Mother?"
 365 Sons of Ham
 366 The Mirror's the Cause of it All
 367 The Widow in the Cottage by the Sea
 368 Tenting on the Old Camp Ground
 369 Marching through Georgia
 370 Cradle isn't Empty, Baby smiled
 371 What kind of Shoes you gwine to wear
 372 Where is Heaven?
 373 Talk about your Mozes
 374 For you we are Praying at Home
 375 Oh, I'll meet you dar
 376 Mother's Calling Baby Home
 377 Tiny Hands
 378 I'm Going Home to Chloe
 379 Keep the Horse-shoe over the Door
 380 The Two Orphans
 381 Don't be Crying, Little Girl
 382 Will the Dear Old Times come back
 383 Brown Eyes Cloie to the Window
 384 Phantom Footsteps
 385 Little Maggie, the Pride of Kilvane
 386 Mother Comes to Me in Dreams
 387 An Old-fashioned Photograph of Mother
 388 Touch the Sleeping Strings

No.

410 I will be True to This
 411 Uncle Tom's Gwine to Stay
 412 Barney McCoy
 413 Chiss Mag and I
 414 Dip Me in de Golden Sea
 415 Leave me not in Anger
 416 Mora Marie
 417 De Angels are a Coming
 418 The Old Plantation Home
 419 Wait till the Clouds Roll by
 420 'Neath the Maple by the Mill
 421 Dalm of Glend
 422 Mrs. Brady's Daughter
 423 Out in the Snow
 424 McDowell's Old Tin Roof
 425 The Old Rustic Bridge by the Mill
 426 Give the Poor all they Honestly Earn
 427 Mary Ann McLaughlin
 428 Mary's Goss with a Goss
 429 Little Brother Joe
 430 Pass us not By
 431 Some Day I'll Wander Back Again
 432 Black-eyed Blinie's Goss to Rest
 433 Wake Nicodemus
 434 By and by you will Forget me
 435 That won't keep a Wife and Baby
 436 Our Cot in Tennessee
 437 I'm Dying for Some One to Love me
 438 Bring me a Letter from Home
 439 Why did the Angels take Mamma away
 440 Peek-a-Boo!
 441 Sweet as a Peach
 442 When the Roses come Again
 443 Moonlight at Killarney
 444 The Widow Nolan's Goss
 445 I Guess you have All been There
 446 Finger Prints upon the Pane
 447 I'm One of the Ticklish Kind
 448 Angels will Open the Beautiful Gates
 449 The Patter of the Shingle
 450 I'll Take my Home again, Kathleen
 451 Miss Brady's Piano For-tay
 452 Kissing Sunbeams
 453 Take Me back to Home and Mother
 454 Days that are gone Seem the Brightest
 455 The Pretty Little Cottage in the Meadow
 456 Loved Ones Passed Away
 457 Dreamy Eyes are Closed for ever
 458 When Autumn Leaves turn Red and Gold
 459 Don't Forget a Friend
 460 Angels are Watching Above
 461 We Never Speak as we pass by
 462 Mary Smiled the Clouds Away
 463 Only a Workman's Child
 464 I'll Meet You when the Sun Goes down
 465 Love Will Roll the Clouds Away
 466 Starlight on the Sea
 467 Only a Pansy Blossom
 468 Dimpled Hands
 469 Hush, my Darling, do not Cry
 470 Dear Little Pansy Blossom
 471 Little Maggie Ann
 472 Only a Crape on the Door
 473 I'm Still a Friend to You
 474 In His Mind
 475 Take Me Back Home
 476 Is that Mr. Reilly?
 477 When the Moon-Beeams Fall
 478 Please, Give me a Penny
 479 The Prayer on the Pier
 480 Good-Bye Mavourneen
 481 The Rose-Bush by the Gate
 482 Give an Honest Irish Lad a Chance
 483 Jennie, my Loved one
 484 Angels Called Thee, Little Darling
 485 Charming Little Ada
 486 Poor Little Joe
 487 The Man Behind the Plough
 488 Where is My Boy To-night
 489 Don't be angry, Mother
 490 Bo-Peep
 491 Fifty-cent
 492 The Spider and the Fly
 493 Found Dead in the Street
 494 Sweet Violets
 495 Whispering Hope
 496 Bring the Angels back to me
 497 The Gwine to Alabama
 498 Under the Roof-tree
 499 There's a Dear Spot in Ireland
 500 Your Pocket Book's your Friend
 501 Let these Kisses say Farewell

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